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The Poet Saints of Mahārāshtra

Volume XI

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BY

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P R I N C I P A L,

UNITED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

of

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Nectar from Indian Saints

AN

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

OF

MAHĪPATI'S MARĀTHĪ

BHAKTALĪLĀMRIT

CHAPTERS 1-12, 41-51

BY

The Late Dr JUSTIN E. ABBOTT,

The Late PUNDIT N. R. GODBOLE,

AND

J. F. EDWARDS

1935

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NECTAR FROM INDIAN SAINTS

INTRODUCTION

BY

J. F. Edwards

Prefatory : Mahipati's *Bhaktalīlāmrit* in the Poet Saints Series

In sending forth this English translation of the *Bhaktalīlāmrit* as the eleventh volume in the Poet Saints of Mahārāshtra Series it is necessary to remind the reader that more than one half of Mahipati's Marathi masterpiece of 1774 has already been translated in this series. Twelve chapters, those numbered thirteen to twenty-four, contain Mahipati's Life of Eknāth and were translated in the second volume of this series under the title *Eknāth* in 1927; and sixteen chapters, those numbered twenty-five to forty, contain Mahipati's Life of Tukārām and were translated in the seventh volume under the title *Tukārām* in 1930. Thus out of the fifty-one chapters in Mahipati's original the present work contains twenty-three, viz., chapters one to twelve and chapters forty-one to fifty-one. Any reader who wishes to follow a continuous English translation of Mahipati's entire *Bhaktalīlāmrit* should therefore read the first twelve chapters in the present book, then volume two in this series, following this by volume seven, and completing the work by reading the latter half of the present book. A brief summary of the twelve chapters by Mahipati containing the Life of Eknāth (chapters 13-24) will be found in his last chapter, chapter 51, translated on pages 422-423 of the

present book; and a similar summary of his Life of Tukārām (chapters 25-40) will be found on our pages 423-425.

1

How The Present Book Was Prepared

In view of America's noble efforts in many directions for India's uplift it is worthy of note that the draft translation of the great bulk of the three works referred to above, which embody the English translation of this great Marathi classic, was prepared on American soil in the late Dr Justin Abbott's home of learning at Summit in New Jersey. There we had the privilege of spending an unforgettable month at the end of 1929 and the beginning of 1930. Dr Abbott's Preface to the *Eknūth* section is dated April 1926, his Preface to the *Tukārām* section is dated May 10, 1929, and at the end of chapter 51 concluding his long task we found the following note by him: 'The translation was completed on the 18th day of February, 1932.' This was exactly four months and one day before he passed away on June 19, 1932. Of the twenty-three chapters of Mahipati's *Bhaktalīlāmrit* translated in this book Dr Abbott prepared the first draft of ten chapters, viz., the first nine chapters and the concluding chapter of the whole. The late Pundit N. R. Godbole, whose loss on February 16, 1934 we lamented in our Foreword to volume 10 in the series, prepared the basic draft of the translation in the remaining chapters of this work, viz., chapters 10-12 and 41-50. The learned Pundit, indeed, translated the whole by way of his own first draft and we have drawn from it throughout. Our own task as editor of the volume has been to weave together the two translations by the Doctor and the Pundit wherever both were available, to compare the whole translation in the twenty-three chapters, consisting of 4,895 verses or

19,580 Marathi lines, with the original from Mahipati's pen by the help of other Marathi scholars who have generously come to our help, to correct the manuscript for the printers, to go through the proofs and prepare the special notes at the end of the book. We are also responsible for the title which commended itself warmly to all whom we consulted; the title given to the work by Mahipati, *Bhaktatīlāmrit*, probably means *Nectar of the wonderful works of the Saints*. Sometimes amid one's round of daily duties it has seemed well-nigh impossible to do anything like justice to the task, and though we are conscious of many blemishes in the completed book, we have been amply repaid by the honey we have been able to carry away to our own Christian hive and have found it to be *nectar* indeed. As we have slowly worked our way through these nearly twenty thousand rich Marathi lines we have found them to provide a veritable encyclopædia of Indian biography and autobiography, 'full of human interest,' to quote the late scholar of Summit, 'full of food for the moralist, full of suggestions for the idealist, and an inspiration to a better and nobler life.' This has been an enriching reward for the heavy task of correcting, editing and weaving into one the two translations prepared in the first instance by the two noble scholars, one Indian and the other American, who have both passed away. As both these learned men had done their work under conditions of growing physical weakness it was natural that their manuscripts called for much more correction than did their previous Mss. And as we have perused their hundreds of typewritten pages and have realized that they contained the mature scholarship of modern *bhaktas* (or saints), we have felt that the entire work overflowed with *nectar* indeed, the nectar of two of God's gentlemen.

• The Abbott Collection of Marathi and Sanskrit Books •

Under the above title another lover of Marathi literature, the Rev Dr Robert Ernest Hume, who laboured several years as a missionary in Western India and is now Professor of the History of Religions in the Union Theological Seminary, New York, contributed anonymously the account we reproduce below to the second issue of *Bibliotheca Columbiana*, which is published from time to time by the friends of the Library of Columbia University, New York City. This Library is housed in a building which cost the donor, Edward S. Harkness, approximately four million dollars and is known as South Hall, having been described by President Butler of Columbia as 'the finest academic building' which he knew. It will be of interest to Indian readers to know that many of the reference books on India used by the learned scholar of Summit now find their home in this notable Library. Dr Robert Ernest Hume writes as follows in the December 1934 issue of *Bibliotheca Columbiana* :-- 'The largest collection of books in the Marathi language existing anywhere in the Western continent has been bequeathed to the Columbia University Library by the late Justin E. Abbott, D. D. After a theological course at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, Dr Abbott went in 1880 to India in order to continue with the work which his father, the Rev Amos Abbott, had entered in 1834. When he died at the age of 79 in Summit, New Jersey, the span of time covered by the continuous connection of father and son with India was ninety-eight years. Dr Abbott made himself a master, in particular, of the religious heritage of Western India as that is to be found in the vernacular of the people of that region. More than any

native son of Western India or any other foreigner, it was he who made available, in the English language as well as in assembled original texts, the treasures of religious aspiration which may be found scattered in the vernacular of the common people.

‘ Before Dr Abbott died, he had arranged to bequeath to the Columbia University Library, as the most central place in this country where such a special collection would be most likely to be used for further scholarly work, the very valuable collection of original sources along with many other books in the Marathi language and also some books in the allied ancient Sanskrit language. No other American scholar has contributed so much through English translations from the Marathi language which now is the living language of about nineteen million residents of Western India.’ [This figure has increased to about twenty-one millions.]

‘ Part of the Abbott Collection has been catalogued already by Professor Samuel Joshi, Litt. D., Professor of Comparative Religion at Dartmouth College. The Sanskrit books will constitute a valuable addition to the extensive collection of books in that field already assembled in the Columbia University Library. But Dr Abbott’s Marathi books are quite unique. Already request has been received from another educational institution in Connecticut for the loan of Marathi material not known to exist anywhere else in this country. And when information about this Abbott Collection becomes further disseminated, its usefulness will doubtless be increased for the study of Hinduism, the chief indigenous religion of India.’

III

Dr Abbott on Methods of Bible Translation

A few months before Dr Abbott passed away he wrote the following which is of value on a question of great

interest to many in Western India :—‘ The various translations of the New Testament from the Carey version of more than a hundred years ago to the present one as published by the Bible Society have always received more kicks than praise. They have been jeeringly called “missionary Marathi.” But those who have thus jeered have not been aware of the facts. It has never been “missionary Marathi,” but has always been, and is so today, Greek-Marathi. Let me explain. From Carey’s time to the present version Hindu pundits have always been at the elbow of the missionary who was responsible for the portion assigned to him. Missionaries never did the translation themselves. It is the work of Hindu pundits but whose translation was limited by the missionary who insisted on accuracy first, even though it offended the Marathi ear. (See the *Memorial Papers of the American Marathi Mission 1813-1881* by the Rev H. J. Bruce, published in 1882.) Let me add a word of personal experience. The basis of the present version as published by the Bible Society is that made by a Committee of four, consisting of the Indian Christian scholar the late Rev Baba Padmanji, the Hindu grammarian the late Trimbak Shastri Joshi, Dr Mackichan and myself. We spent five years or more on the New Testament, working every afternoon. We could have done our work quicker, but accuracy of translation was our first consideration. We sometimes laboured the whole afternoon to find some Marathi expression that would exactly translate the Greek text. I can state positively that not a single sentence was ever finally decided upon without the approval of the two Marathi scholars. Dr Mackichan [who has passed away since these lines were written] will bear me out in this. The approval was not always given because it pleased their ear, but because the Bible Society had wished us to put accuracy first and pleasing the ear second. Our version

therefore was not "missionary Marathi" but Greek-Marathi. Mr Athavale has been under no such restriction. He proposed to prepare a version pleasant to the ear, but at the same time as accurate as he could make it, and I understand that in this idea of his he has been most successful. It will thus be seen that the two versions proceed from two separate points of view. The Bible Society's version aims at accuracy, giving second place to pleasing the ear. Mr Athavale puts pleasing the ear first, and gives accuracy the second place. And yet the aim of both is the same. Mr Athavale's version supplies the need of those who desire an idiomatic Marathi, and the Bible Society the need of those who want accuracy, whether it pleases the ear or not.

'The most accurate method would be to use the Greek word and explain it at length in a commentary as I have done with Marathi words in my translation where there is no equivalent word in English and explained them in a glossary. English readers are rather glad to have new words and idioms introduced into English. Instead of the Greek word a literal translation can be used, unintelligible to the reader at first sight, but explained later. Those, however, who do not wish for such in a translation of the New Testament can now happily have one free from Greek idioms and free from the spirit of the Greek.

'Allow me to give another illustration from personal experience. The translations I am making from old Marathi poetry in the Poet Saints of Mahārāshtra Series are not ordinary English but Marathi-English. It is not my ordinary style, but it happens that it pleases the English ear as I judge from private letters and reviews. It would appear that there are readers of the Marathi New Testament who prefer a version free from Greek

influence, in pure Marathi. This taste is perfectly legitimate, and they are to be congratulated that Mr Athavale has supplied their need. And let not those who stress accuracy fear that a version with some inaccuracies of translation will have less power over the conscience. King James' version is admittedly based on a text that is full of errors, and with lapses in translation. But can anyone say therefore that King James' version has had less influence for good than the present more correct versions? So let there be peace, each side thankful that each side can have their tastes gratified. Let there be no throwing of stones at each other, but only praise. In whatever version the following verse appears, whether in purest Marathi or in Greek-Marathi, it makes the same appeal to the conscience: "Brethren, as much as lieth in you, live in peace with all men." This is not the place to enter upon a discussion of the merits or demerits of the new translation referred to in the foregoing. This we have done briefly in the English columns of the *Dnyanodaya* (or *Rise of Knowledge*) dated October 31, 1935. We are glad to know the book is having a good sale.

IV

Humility and Undogmatic Temper of Mahipati's Saints

Some of the sweetest nectar derived by readers of Mahipati's *Bhaktalīlāmṛit* comes from the beautiful humility of the Indian saints he describes. Most of them, if not all, had they been asked whose character they disliked most, as was Charles Kingsley, would have answered as he did, 'My own.' There is also such a beautiful simplicity about a host of these Indian saints that one feels they would have exclaimed with that visionary of the mediæval period, Julian of Norwich, 'To me was shown no higher stature than childhood.' And though their simplicity so often degenerates into superstition

because of their devotion to their images or idols, the other spiritual conditions they fulfil of humility and penitence give them an intimacy with the Unseen, despite their perpetual *Neti Neti* (' Not that, Not that ') whenever any definition of the Divine is attempted; just as it is said that the great English Agnostic Herbert Spencer, ' really knew a great deal about " the Unknowable " ' in spite of his doctrine of the Unknowableness of God. Perhaps the apparent contradictions that appear on well-nigh every page of India's *bhakti* saints are best solved by adopting a phrase used by Dr Dearmer in another connection, viz., that these saints yield to us the nectar of a deepening religiousness in proportion as they are increasingly undogmatic.

Mahipati's Imperfect Defence of the Saints

This humility of the Indian saints is so transparently sincere that one feels they would have recoiled from the method of vindication adopted on their behalf by their champion in this book. In verses 63-78 of the first chapter Mahipati is so carried away by his admiration of those whose story he is going to tell that he waxes wroth with those who can ' see only the faults of the saints ' (chapter I. 63). In taking up the cudgels on their behalf he draws upon his wealth of simile and illustration but commits himself to two positions which India itself has come to view as indefensible. In chapter I. 66 it is said that, while the Lord ' adorns His *bhaktas* with devotion,' etc., yet at the same time, ' He allows certain faults to remain in them so that there may be opportunity for some censure; ' and in the next verse, ' the Merciful to the lowly pays no attention to the faults of His *bhaktas*.' Of both these sentiments it may be remarked that if they are anything other than examples of the

poetic license, they compromise the Maker of all in the noble effort to vindicate His imperfect worshippers. May we not rather conjecture that Mahipati was struggling to express the idea set forth in that other Book when it says, 'The bruised reed He will not break, the smoking flax (or dimly burning wick) He will not quench;' for 'He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust' ? In that same religious literature, the literature of the Hebrew race, there was a similar evasion of moral responsibility when the *man* said, 'The *woman* Thou givest me as a companion,' *she* was the one to blame; and the woman said, 'The serpent' was the guilty one 'The man said, "the woman,"' and the 'woman said, "the serpent."' How often has some such evasive formula blinded people to their personal responsibility ! Both these oriental peoples, the Hindus and the Hebrews, alike have learned that it is neither by evasion nor by palliation of evil that its growth and ill effects can be overcome; the one people by their amazing renunciations, pilgrimages and sacrifices; the other by a line of teachers who set forth with unflinching clearness the uncompromising holiness of God on the one hand and the sinfulness of man on the other; while later still the solution of the great antimony was found in the forgiveness of sins and the progressive sanctification of the sinner. No one who is intimate with Mahipati's famous trilogy of books (see Chapter I. 79-81) and with the Christian Bible can fail to be impressed by the amazing similarity of the moral problem faced in the two sets of literature and by the equally amazing contrast in the solutions reached. To help in breaching the gap presented by the mutual ignorance of East and West regarding both the similarity and the contrast is one main purpose of the Poet Saints of Mahārāshtra Series.

Ugly Features of Hindu and Other Literature

Candour compels the admission that not *all* the contents of Mahipati's *Bhaktatīlāmrit* may be described as pure nectar. In a few passages of the translation we have felt it desirable to act the part of a censor by paraphrasing instead of translating, indicating every such place by means of a foot-note. It has seemed to us that, in these few passages, ugly features of Hinduism were better left discreetly out of sight. If some of our Western readers should be tempted to give way to a smug feeling of satisfaction that *all* Western literature is on a worthier level, we would venture to ask : Are you quite sure of that ? For though there was no censor in the time of Mahipati, there is hardly a cultured nation today without its national censor of cinematograph films, and the reports of these censors provide some humbling reading to every Westerner who has come to India. And what about 'the glorification of adultery in fiction' today, the desecration of wedded love, 'the great increase of homosexual vice' ? What of Mr Alfred Noyes' withering analysis that the ugly is preferred to the beautiful, lust viewed as the 'higher continence,' breaking a pledged word as a form of freedom, and evil itself as good ? 'Fair is foul and foul is fair.' One American book has said, 'The boxing *industry* is reaching gigantic proportions ; Mr Dempsey received 750,000 dollars for thirty minutes' *work*.' And Britain's 1929 official statistics included the following : 'Drink, £ 288,800,000 ; bread, £ 80,000,000 ; hospitals, £ 14,000,000 ; League of Nations, £ 115,000.' Why do we point out these facts ? In order to say that peoples who *say* they have known Jesus Christ have a much bigger responsibility than those who have not, and that the only fitting attitude for Western peoples today is that of penitence

for the bad example so many of their citizens are setting the rest of the world.

'Paganism in Current Fiction'

Under this title one of our leading religious weeklies printed in London had the following paragraph recently:—'No thoughtful reader of contemporary fiction—and it is in the novel that the spirit of our day is most in evidence—can have failed to notice the almost complete absence of the religious note. Paganism naked and unashamed rules both the characters and the incidents. The whole plot too often works itself out in a religionless world, a world from which prayer, spirituality, even conventional church or chapel-going have been entirely and almost unconsciously eliminated. Addressing an audience of avowedly Christian people the other day on the subject of the New Paganism, Mr Justice Slesser referred to the assumption of modern novelists that the Christian standard of morals had no place in ordinary life, with the inference that the only people who go to church or pay anything more than lip-service to Christian principles are the hopelessly dull, hide-bound or eccentric, or those morbid souls, mostly women, who have failed to find any more satisfactory outlet for their surplus emotions. It is a serious indictment, but there can be little doubt of its truth. Where do these novelists live, we wonder, and why do they ignore the multitudes, particularly of healthy, normal young men and women who still crowd many a church and to whom religion, even if not so limited in outlook and expression as their fathers' and mothers,' is a most active element in their life? What is urgently called for is a new school of fiction which, while using the modern idiom of situation and dialogue, would give its rightful place to the religious factor which still operates. Why should the immense religious public be denied a novelist of front rank?'

Hinduism 150 Years Ago And Today

One of the most fascinating and rewarding exercises would be to compare the Hinduism of 1774 reflected in Mahipati's *Bhaktatīlāmrit* with the religion of a cultured Hindu of our own day. We should have an illustration of Dean Inge's observation that 'obsolete beliefs are allowed to drop off quietly,' for no religion ever 'formally admits that it has been wrong,' and the inevitable progress of things is making very clear that 'error does not become more respectable by being petrified.' This is becoming increasingly clear even in India where, as the late Dr Sir Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar once remarked, 'Custom is the great king.' It was this same great *sānt* who on one occasion declared that religious reform was one of India's most urgent needs. This reform is not keeping pace with other reforms, for one of the most far-reaching differences that any comparison would show between our own age and that of Mahipati's saints would be the astonishing mark that education is leaving on every aspect of modern India. And since, according to Baron von Hugel, 'science is the purgatory of religion,' we may expect to see it cleansing away many unworthy beliefs about God, man and the world which obtain currency in the India of today. One deep conviction of the present writer is that if India is to realize its true place among the nations there must be a courageous adaptation of religious principles to new conditions, and 'a readiness to accept new discoveries as a divine revelation, the message of the Spirit of our time.' For ourselves, we are convinced that it is a *helpful* antipathy between those who think that social reform consists only in improving the environment, and those who see that nature is even more important than nurture.' Should any of

our readers feel disposed to make an attack upon us for saying such things we will content ourselves by saying, with one of the most provoking but most helpful writers of our time, 'This is the manure which makes our reputation grow.'

The Golden Age of Marathi *Bhakti* & the Threat of the Harijans

One potent reason why we should acquaint ourselves with the biographical and autobiographical Hindu religious literature of a century and a half past is that, by common consent, present-day India is passing through a widespread revival of its ancient religions. And though the motive for this revival is stained by the muddy waters of political strife, its chief end being the increase of communal numbers with a view to claiming increased communal advantages on the democratic basis of counting heads, yet there is mingled with the communal misuse of religion sufficient of real interest in the ancient books and their authors to justify a careful study of these by those whose interest may be either purely historical or solely religious. For in the *Bhaktalīlāmṛt* we see Hinduism as it was actually lived in the golden age of Marathi *bhakti*. What that golden age signified and how far the Hinduism of to-day is regarded by reformed Hindus themselves as having drifted are shown by striking paragraphs in an issue of *Federated India* during October this year (1935). This journal was dealing with the threat of wholesale forsaking of Hinduism by Western India Harijans. *Federated India* pointed out that mere economic and social remedies forget that the spiritual needs of the Depressed Classes are equally necessary. Says its editor in a truly remarkable note: 'What seems to us to be the remedy is to organise vigorously a campaign of religious service to the non-caste

Hindus with a view to bring them within the pale of caste. Fortunately for us of to-day, our great thinkers had foreseen the advent of these problems, and the Vaishnav or *Bhakti* movement in various parts of the country at various periods was the result of a deeper realisation of the vital needs of Hindu society in the distant future. The reforms of Shri Rāmānuja, of Shri Chaitanya, of the Mahārāshtra saints and of the “Dāsa” school of devotees amongst Madhwas in the Karnātak, all these were constructive attempts to enlarge the fold of Hinduism, to infuse a spirit of godliness as a sufficient credential in the place of technical ritualism, and to lessen the rigour of barriers of caste and position by a passionate devotion to God, the common Saviour of high and low, of rich and poor. These movements have practically come to an end for many decades now and the consequence has been a cessation of the play of the finer impulses of Hindu society. The economic structure was not directly sought to be changed, but a movement of spiritual and social uplift was carried on from within the society and it effected permanent improvements in economic conditions also. But for these forces Hinduism would have become completely ossified by this time.’

VII

The *Bhagwat Puran* As One Of Mahipati's Chief Sources

Mahipati's writings show one chief religious force in Hindu Mahārāshtra was a popular form of religious literature. It would take us too far afield to enter upon a full discussion of the historical and religious value of the Hindu *Purāṇs* so often referred to in our translation of Mahipati's *Bhaktalīlāmṛt*. Two general observations are permissible. They illustrate the force of the remark made by Harneek, the German historian, that legend is

the 'creeper of history' and 'its worst enemy.' At the same time the Hindu *Purāṇs* illustrate the remark of another modern scholar that legends are valuable because 'they contain the people's religious philosophy of history.' It would be interesting if we could have reliable evidence of the present-day influence of the *Purāṇs* on the Indian mind. Probably it is still very considerable, though it is worthy of note that a Pandharpur correspondent to *The Times of India* wrote on July 4, 1935 that '*Purāṇs* are merely fictitious tales and if they are to be accepted as authority, to sum up the remarks of the judge of Pandharpur in the famous Widow Tonsure case, (see below), why not accept the works of fiction by recent authors?' Equally worthy of note is the fact that India's Arya Samajists have completely repudiated the *Purāṇs*, preferring to take their stand on the authority of the Vedas. It only remains for us to mention the fact that the *Bhāgvat Purāṇ* is the one *Purāṇ* referred to most often in this and Mahāpati's other works. This is sometimes described in English books as merely *The Bhāgavata* and sometimes under its fuller name *Bhāgavata Purāṇ*. Along with the *Bhagavadgītā* it is one of the two chief scriptures of the *Bhāgavata* Religion of Mahārāshtra and of the *Warkarī* sect. (In the *Life and Teaching of Tukārām*, an English book we published in 1922, we have summarized on pages 171-3 the chief tenets of the *Warkarīs* and of the Religion of Mahārāshtra.) In his *Mysticism In Mahārāshtra* (pp. 7-10) Prof R. D. Ranade has a lucid section on '*The Bhāgavata* as a storehouse of Ancient Mysticism' in which he states: 'That the *Bhāgavata* influenced systems of philosophical thought like those of Rāmānuja (1050-1135 A. D.) and Madhwa; that it had by that time earned sufficient confidence from the people to be used as a text-book; that it is the repository of the accounts of the greatest mystics from very ancient times;

that though some of its language may be modern, it contains archaisms of expression and diction which may take it back to the early centuries of the Christian era—all those facts make it impossible that the *Bhāgavata* should have been written, as is sometimes contended, about the 12th century A. D., thus implying unmistakably that it must have been written earlier, *pari passu* with the development of early philosophical systems, so as ultimately in course of time to be able to influence later formulations of thought. The *Bhāgavata* is a repository of the accounts of the Ancient Mystics of India, and if we seek for some Types of Mystics in the *Bhāgavata*, we shall find a number of such Types which later on influenced the whole course of the Mystic Movements.' Dhruva the child-prince, Prahlād the son of the Demon-King, Uddhav the friend of God, Kubjā the crooked concubine, the Elephant who lifted up his trunk to God, Sudāmā the poor devotee, Ajāmila the sexual sinner, Ajgara the contented sage, Rishabhadeva who realized God, Avadhūta the mystic with twenty-four *gurus*, Shuka the philosophizer on the mystical teaching of the *Bhāgavata*, and finally Krishna himself—these constitute the heroes around which the *Bhāgavat Purāṇ* weaves its stories. In his *Outline of the Religious Literature of India* (pp. 229-230) Dr J. N. Farquhar said of this Hindu scripture of the *Bhāgavat Dharma*: 'What distinguishes it from all earlier literature is its new theory of *bhakti*; and therein lies its true greatness. Some of its utterances on this subject are worthy of a place in the best literature of mysticism and devotion. A careful study of those passages will convince the student that they are expressions of a living religious experience....In this rich religious element lies the chief source of the power of the *Bhāgavata*. Hence the hold it has had on some of the best Vaishnav communities and on many of the noble

minds of India.' In a later section of this Introduction we shall have to note briefly a darker side of the *Bhāgwat Purān*.

VIII

Light On The Hindu View of God : *Avatārs* 'Partial' and 'Special'

One of the most valuable contributions made by Mahipati's *Bhaktalīlāmṛt* is the light it throws on the Hindu view of God. 'In religion we should take care of the great things,' says one English thinker, and it will be agreed that the greatest thing religion has to 'take care of' is the teaching about God. Now two of the most distinctive features of the doctrine of God in the fascinating pages of Mahipati's *Bhaktalīlāmṛt* are the twin ideas of 'partial incarnations' and 'special incarnations.' We shall see below that the term 'incarnations' in the plural is so loose as not to be allowable. A typical case of a partial *avatār* is given in chapter 11 verses 23-25 : 'In order to save the world, the gods Brahmā, Vishnu, and Hara (i. e., Shiva) will assume *avatārs* by means of their portions in the *Kālī Yuga*. 24. *Yogamayā* (i. e., the illusion of God), the Primal Force, will descend as an *avatār* in Muktabāi. Nivrattirāj will have the portion of the Husband of Mridāni (Shiva), and the great Vishnu will become Dnyāndev. 25. The *avatār* of Brahmadev will be called Sopān.' The original Marathi for the remarkable phrase, 'will assume *avatārs* by means of their portions,' is घेतील अवतार अंश रूपे and we need to grasp its full significance if we are to appreciate its far-reaching effects as set forth by some of the most acute Indian thinkers of to-day. Another illustration out of many is where Rāmrajā, King of Devgiri (the modern Daulatābād) says to Chāngdev in VII. 73 of this work,

'You are a true portion of God' (आपण ईश्वर अंश पूर्णः); also in IX. 178. It has long been common ground among the scholars that the religion of Hindu *Bhakti* in Mahārāshtra is correctly described as the *Bhāgavata* (or *Bhāgwat*) Religion, that the two authoritative sacred books are the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Bhāgavata* (or *Bhāgwat*) *Purān* and that it was mainly on these two sacred books that Marathi-speaking saints nurtured their souls. It is therefore of the utmost importance for a proper understanding of Mahipati's *Bhaktalīlāmrit*, and especially of such passages as II. 23-25, to remember that one of the distinctive aspects of the teaching of this authoritative scripture of Mahārāshtra, the *Bhāgwat Purān*, as also of other ancient Hindu *Purāns*, is that it speaks even of Krishna 'as a partial *avatār* of God' and as 'only a particle of the supreme Being,' the terms we quote here being those of that great Indian Brahmo scholar of Bengal, Pundit Sitanath Tattvabhushan, in *The Indian Messenger* of a few years ago (August 28, 1921) where he added that such an idea 'must have humbled all thoughtful Vaishnavs.' In the *Mahratta* of Nov. 3, 1935 the editor stated : 'The Hindu has to make the distinction between *Pūrṇa Avatārs* and partial *Avatārs*. Shankar does not regard even Krishna as a *Pūrṇa Avatār*. In fact the *Pūrṇa Avatār* is a popular fiction. The Hindu list of *Avatārs* is not fixed. It is always open to addition.' Concerning the second idea in II. 23-25, viz., 'special incarnations,' Pundit Tattvabhushan feels he must use such strong language as to say that the Vaishnav *Purāns* 'pander ever and anon to the popular view that particular persons are incarnations of God in a special sense.'

Narayan Vaman Tilak on Incarnation and 'Partial'

Avatars

On this subject it is of interest to note that the late Narayan Vaman Tilak, whom Mr N. C. Kelkar once

pronounced as the worthy doyen among Marathi poets, pointed out in his *Dnyanodaya* Marathi column of April 8, 1915 that the two terms 'incarnation' (देहधारण) and *avatār* are by no means the same in connotation and that the differing ideas on the subject among Hindus and Christians affect form (स्वरूप), number (संख्या), and mission (कार्य). Hindus, said N. V. Tilak, believe that an *avatār* may be in part only, in the sense that any particular 'incarnation' may be described as a portion of God Himself: but that Christians hold an 'incarnation' of only a part of the Almighty as an impossibility, for when God incarnates Himself at all His Incarnation must be in itself complete and perfect. It is clear therefore that *avatār* and 'incarnation' are not only different words but that they connote very different ideas. Just as the root meaning of *avatār* is 'descent,' so also the 'descent' is followed by a withdrawal and then by other descents; while 'incarnation' means that humanity is *laid hold of* by God, entered by God, and shared by God and that this manifestation of God in and through man effects such wonders that no repetition is required. 'Once done it is done for ever.' As Pundit Tattvabhushan puts it: 'Christianity recognizes only one incarnation of God and that is Jesus Christ,' a climacteric manifestation of God in human history that initiates a new humanity and leaves behind in men's hearts the incarnating Spirit of God-in-Christ as an inward moral dynamic. This view is held to mean incomparably more to feeble humanity than innumerable interventions on man's behalf by partial *avatārs*.

N. V. Tilak's other two points of contrast between *avatār* and 'incarnation' are worthy of note. This great Christian poet of *bhakti*, who in a Poona meeting on May 9 this year (1935) was mentioned as one of the trio, 'Tukārām, Tilak and Tagore,' pointed out concerning the *number*

of deities that to give up the idea of *one* God and conceive the notion of *many* gods was to Christian minds a *sin*. Regarding the *mission* (कर्म) of deity he quoted the *Bhāgavadgītā* which says, 'Every time when righteousness is on the wane and unrighteousness prevails, I create myself. To save the righteous, *to destroy the wicked* and to establish virtue, I am born in every age;' and in contrast with the four words we have printed in italics, N. V. Tilak set forth the work of Jesus, the Incarnate Son of God, as being *solely* to seek the lost, to save the fallen and to establish God's Kingdom on earth.

IX

Idolatry In Mahīpati's Book

One special reason for drawing attention to the foregoing question is to emphasize that these twin ideas of God ('partial' and 'special *avatārs*') are a sufficient explanation of another factor at work throughout the *Bhaktalīlāmṛt*, viz., the multiplicity of gods in *Bhakti* India, with the consequent all-pervading idolatry in Mahīpati's works. An encouraging sign today is that idolatry is bemoaned by India's own sons as one of India's greatest curses. Indeed, Gandhiji in his temple-entry campaign went so far as to say that some of India's temples are the abode of vice. This, however, is the inevitable result of polytheism which is always, without exception, marked by the absence of the Supreme Holiness we expect in God, as is shown by those immortal *Paurāṇic* stories which are so often protested against by India's own reformers. When the *Bhāgavat Purāṇ* can say in X. 30-35 that 'the transgression of virtue witnessed in the gods must not be charged as faults' and that 'their conduct is *sometimes* correct' it means that the pole-star of religion has shifted, and that Dr Sir Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar's remedy suggested by him at the 1902 Provincial Social Conference

in Sholapur is the only one possible, viz., 'a radical course of reform based upon the reform of the Hindu religion.' How deep-seated is India's need of 'religious reform' is clear from the fact that idol-worship has so prominent a place in Mahipati's *Bhaktalilāmṛit*, both when he is expressing his own opinions and indicating those of his heroes. A sample case of the former is in chapter VI. 4 : 'We should worship the image of Vishnu to achieve our desires, and we should lovingly prostrate our body before it.' His own view and that held by his many heroes and heroines are both found together in many of his stories, a sample of which is found in that about Niranjan Swāmi in chapter 50, verses 77-104. In verse 80 we see Niranjan 'every day worshipping the image of Ganpati' which 'he worshipped in all the proper ways' (84). In the story about this Swāmi, quite typical of the rest, we read of other images also, 'the image of Vishnu' (86), Shiva, Pāndurang and the *Linga* (97), 'the image of Shāligrām' (100), 'an image of Hanumant' (102), and even of 'thirty-three crores (or 330 millions) of gods' (91), and in the closing verse of his story about Niranjan, we have the stamp of Mahipati's own approval placed on idol-worship when he states : 'The fortunate saints have established the worship of a *ṣaḡun* (or visible) image with devotion; and if this means is heartily followed, the seeker of spiritual riches will have a direct manifestation of God' (104). Another example out of scores in Mahipati's book is that in VII. 23 where Chāṅgdev is told : 'Go and live by the Godāvāri river and worship this image with all the materials for worship;' and when he had arrived at Pūnyastambh (the present-day Puntāmbā) he 'called the distinguished Brāhmans who bathed the idol while repeating the Vedic *mantras* and then anointed it with the five nectars' (VII. 53). It is because an increasing

number of India's constructive minds are realizing that a worthy and enduring Indian nation is impossible on an idolatrous basis and because we passionately desire to help in the building of such a nation that we are stressing this point. In exalting the worship of the idol Mahipati all unintentionally was doing the greatest possible disservice to his people whom he loved so passionately. Providentially for India and the world a great corrector appeared on the Indian scene even before Mahipati had left it.

India's Noble Protest Against Idolatry

It is a striking fact that two years before this notable *Bhaktalilāmrit* was completed in 1774 with its approval of idolatry on almost every page, there was born (in 1772) 'The Father of Modern India,' Ram Mohun Roy, whose vehemence against idolatry in all its forms would alone have sufficed to give him a distinctive place in Indian history. This moral and intellectual giant was born at Rādhānagar, a village in the Hooghly District, on May 22, 1772 and passed away, during a visit to England, in Bristol on Sept. 27, 1833. Perhaps more than any other man he exposed the wickedness of idolatry, the unutterable ruin it has brought on India's lovely people and the blight it has exercised on the influence of the Hindu religion. No foreigner has ever referred to idols in greater scorn than did Ram Mohun Roy, for to him 'the root-evil of the whole wretched state of Hindu society was idolatry.' In his own words 'Hindu idolatry, more than any other pagan worship, destroys the texture of society.' His revolt against idolatry dated back to four years he lived at Benares after the age of twelve, and at sixteen (two years before Mahipati's death in 1790) Ram Mohun Roy wrote a treatise against idols and became the lifelong denunciator of their absurdities and superstitions. Noble

work of priceless value against idol-worship has been done in many parts of India by the society which Ram Mohun Roy founded for the purpose of Hindu religious reformation, the Brahmo Samaj. But idol-worship still remains a curse on India's life despite the century-long anti-idolatry campaign of many of India's greatest sons. This is clear from a paragraph dated July 7, 1935 from the editor of *The Indian Messenger*, the weekly organ of India's parent Theistic body, the Calcutta Brahmo Samaj, who under the heading 'The Worship of the Idol' said:— 'The question is how far the Brahmo Samaj has been successful in combating the worship of the idol in the land. We all know what fearless and incessant war Ram Mohun Roy waged against idol-worship. The history of the Brahmo Samaj for the last hundred years is the history of sacrifices for the vindication of the Brahmo ideal of worship. The Brahmos should pause and seriously think whether they have fallen short of the ideal and compromised in any way with the worship of the idol. It is true the idol is not worshipped in the Brahmo Samajes of India. It is also true, no Brahmo worships the the idol in public or in private. But this is not enough. The whole country is still idol-worshipper. Nay, the thirty-five years of the twentieth century have seen a set-back, a revival of the idol-worship in the land among the Hindus. Worse still is the fact that *this worship has taken up a scientific pose*. The Brahmo should wake up and attack the enemy immediately.' On the clause we have italicized, see below.

Idoltrous Conditions In Nationalist India

The foregoing in *The Indian Messenger* of July 7 led one of its Brahmo readers to write to the editor the following amazing letter which appeared in the issue of July 21:— '(1) You have done right in drawing the attention

of the Brahmo community to idol-worship in *The Indian Messenger* of the 7th inst. Our attitude towards it should be clearly defined. It would not be far from the truth if we say that some of us are co-operating with the practice. Brahmo teachers, students and officers have been seen to contribute to the *Saraswatī Pūjah* (celebrated almost in all the colleges, schools and public libraries) and *Sāra-jank Durga Pūjah* funds...(2) Almost all social functions (e. g., marriages) of the Hindus are attended with idolatrous functions. We have to accept invitations from Hindu friends on such occasions as well as to *Pūjahs*, etc. Our attitude in this respect should be made clear. (3) The revival of idol-worship is partly due to the spirit of nationalism generated during the days of the Bengal Partition Movement in 1905. For the last 30 years... incidental reference is made to it (idol-worship). I think *direct* propaganda should be made against it from now. Public lectures not only in the Brahmo Mandirs but also in public halls and parks should be organised. An All-India Day may be observed and pamphlets and books should be published and distributed free. (4) Before the (annual) *Durgā Pūjah* commences, *articles defending idolatry appear in almost all the dailies and weeklies of Bengal* (our italics). Organized attempts should be made to send reasonable criticisms of these...(5) For the formation of public opinion on the subject one or more meetings of the *Brahmo Bandhu Sabha* (which should be previously notified in all the dailies) should be convened. ' The Editor added this Note :—' We are glad that our correspondent has sent us some concrete suggestions which are worth discussing.... A crusade against idol-worship as against all other evils in the land is what is needed. '

The Modern 'Scientific' Defence of Idolatry

It is worth asking what exactly is the 'scientific pose'

which vindicators of idol-worship are adopting in these enlightened days. One of the chief exponents of this 'scientific pose' is no less a person than the eloquent and popular Indian philosopher, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, who in defending and idealizing idolatry is very gravely misleading his countrymen. In a paper entitled 'The Heart of Hinduism' contributed some years ago to *The Hibbert Journal* Dr Radhakrishnan admitted that 'idol-worship is unknown in the *Rig-Veda*,' an admission that should have made him pause, but he stressed the idea that later 'Hindu thinkers admitted the lower gods whom the masses ignorantly' worshipped, and he justified this practice of moral infants in the human race by the Hindu verse: 'The feeble-minded finds his God in the idol.' As if it were not condemnation enough that the philosophy underlying a wide religious practice is thus based on what 'the feeble-minded' *thinks* he 'finds,' Dr Radhakrishnan makes the further fatal admission in the same essay that 'the symbol need not be superseded so long as it suggests the right standpoint.' (See the reprinted essay in the one-rupee book published by G. A. Natesan & Co. of Madras entitled *the Heart of Hindusthan* by Dr S. Radhakrishnan, p. 13). But it is exactly because an idol *never* 'suggests the right standpoint' about God as the one Living Loving Father that Raja Ram Mohun Roy and a host of Indian reformers since his day have felt the idol to be India's biggest enemy; one Indian writer (C. Mukerjee) correctly saying it 'blinds us to the true character of God and effectually obliterates our individual sense of morality.' Truth to tell, the idealizing view about Hindu images taken by Dr Radhakrishnan is the same as that taken in the 16th century (1548-1599) by Eknāth whose biography is given in chapters 13-24 of the *Bhaktalīlāmṛit* translated in vol. 2 of this series, and briefly summarized on pages 422-23 of this book.

Pointing out that the *Bhāgavat Purān*, one of Mahārāshtra's chief scriptures, always accommodates itself to human weakness by setting forth an 'easy means to reach the Godhead,' Eknāth in several places says that the *Sagun*, or the manifested, deity is easier to apprehend and approach than the *Nirgun* or the invisible; for, so Eknāth teaches, 'a mind can easily think of the visible rather than of the invisible. Thus, idol-worship is meant for one who cannot realise His presence in all beings. Let a man begin somewhere, and by gradual steps he may be led to higher stages.' (Eknāth's *Bhāgavat*, xxviii, 251-352, 371; quoted from R. D. Ranade's *Mysticism In Mahārāshtra*, p. 247). The tragedy is that India has now suffered long enough from the woes of idolatry to prove convincingly that idol-worship does *not* 'lead to higher stages.' The sad history of idol-worship in India has the value of demonstrating for humanity as a whole that the 'easy means to reach God' are always the wrong means. Nothing connected with God or with the attainment of the divine life in the soul is ever meant to be 'easy.' For good people, as for the best of all, it has ever meant a cross.

Is Idolatry An 'Easy' Way To God?

Reverent and sympathetic students of India's long and tragic religious history may be pardoned for pressing the question: *Has* idol-worship proved to be that 'easy means to reach God' which the scripture of Hindu *bhakti*, the *Bhāgavat Purān*, one of Mahipati's favourite sources, states it to be? For idol-worship has been one of the chief motives of India's astonishing asceticism with its millions of mendicants, *sādhus* and ascetics whose self-mortification goes to extremes which are disastrous socially, economically and religiously. What soul can remain unmoved as it contemplates the indescribable

self-torture inflicted to placate India's imaginary, though visible, deities? We may be forgiven for referring to our paragraph on this subject in *The Life and Teaching of Tukārām* (pp. 45-46) concluding with the words: "Pilgrims' hands are sometimes covered with padded wooden clogs, the soles being studded with hobnails, some devotees in the performance of vows crawling the last stage on their sides or on their ankles, completing the journey by standing on their heads before the idol." No! idol-worship is no 'easy means to reach God!' And yet this defence of idolatry is still being offered to India with ingenious persistence, for it was the chief subject of a long speech reported in over a column of the Marathi daily *Dnyan Prakash* of Poona on April 3, 1935, delivered by the Shri Kshātra Jagad Guru on March 25, 1935 at Mālemudsingi, a village in Kolhapur State, on the occasion of his installing a new idol there: 'Just as a flag is a symbol to arouse patriotism, so an external image arouses devotion to God. For many Indian communities,' so the speech ran, 'are like mere children who cannot appreciate the abstract ideas of the *nirgun* (or invisible) form of God; and just as children use stones when learning how to count in arithmetic, so a community can use idols for the purpose of worshipping God, and this first easy step in *bhakti* will lead on to higher stages.' Which is exactly what idolatry does *not* do.

A 'Mysticism' That Leads To Immorality

There are other aspects of the 'scientific pose' adopted by defenders of idol-worship that call for notice. One is that the legends connected with idols, the Krishna stories, for example, which are often referred to by Mahīpati, are *deliberate* allegory, that 'the real nature of the relation of the Gopis to Krishna is the psychological argument, that the relation is to be only an allegorical representation

of the relation of the senses to the self.' Concerning this view we will only say that the critic who tries to explain such things allegorically is a lost man. It is so easy, so tempting a procedure, that he soon sets no limits to its use and he considers it a way out of every difficulty. Certainly if the Krishna legends were allegories, those who devised them conferred a great disadvantage on their system. Equally indefensible, not only because so harmful to the cause of reformed Hinduism, but also because untenable on every ground, is it to advance 'a mystical explanation of the way in which the Gopīs may be supposed to have enjoyed Krishna. May it not be possible,' asks Prof. R. D. Ranade, 'that, in their mystical realisation, each of the Gopīs had the vision of the Godhead before her and that God so divided Himself before all of them, that He seemed to be enjoyed by each and all at the same time?' (*Mysticism In Mahārāshtra*, p. 11). To this two Indian answers suffice. The first is that to this theory may be applied the words of that great Brahmo scholar, Pundit Sitanath Tattva-bhushana, who, writing on the *Bhāgavat Dharma* in that able Theistic weekly of Calcutta, *The Indian Messenger*, on Nov. 27, 1921, observed, 'Gravely questioning whether the story of an unholy love can be thus interpreted with any show of reason and without serious injury to the moral life of those who would accept such an interpretation,..... one thing we are most anxious to emphasize, and that is that neither the authors of the *Purāṇs* nor their latter day exponents and followers, including Chaitanya and his disciples, offer even the slightest clue to such an interpretation.' The second answer we take from the other able Theistic weekly, the *Bombay Subodh Patrika*, which on March 3, 1935 in a note on Chaitanya, after speaking of the 'cult of amourism, woven round the life-story of Shri Krishna,' stated: 'Whatever

the Gopis of Vrindāvan may or may not have been, there is not the slightest doubt that the episode has led in India to the *Guru*-cult of the worst kind imaginable. It has installed outrageous immoral conduct on the throne of religion; it has bred superstition that has led to social degeneration; it has made current the principle of salvation that is a complete negation of spiritual principle and practice.'

Evils Resulting From Idolatry

Our motive for thus seeking to expose the hollowness of idol-worship and its evil results is not only to give the support due from every lover of India to the noble-minded Indian theistic reformers of today who have taken up the anti-idolatry banner of Raja Ram Mohun Roy. Our aim is also to help in laying an enduring foundation for effective campaigns against the evils resulting from idol-worship. Those are writ large not only on Mahipati's pages but on the page of India's current history. Space presents our referring to more than one or two of these evils. The first is that of dedicating Indian girls to idols. On this subject Gandhiji published in the *Harijan* in 1934 a heart-breaking letter from an Andhra graduate who wrote: 'Do you think there is any other profession worse than that of the dancing girls in the universe? Hindu society here engages dancing girls, especially during marriages and festivals of the deity, to sing obscene songs accompanied by obscene gestures *before the pious deity* (our italics) and sets a bad example before the newly wed couple.' On this letter Gandhiji made the comment: 'This institution for the perpetuation of vice must go, if Hinduism is to be purified.' Dealing with this same subject, *The Indian Messenger* of Calcutta went so far as to say: 'Most people profess belief in idolatry and various gods of the Hindu pantheon, though they have no actual

faith in these gods. It is they who mislead the ignorant castes who take advantage of this institution of dedicating girls in order to have incomes from their shameful life under the garb of religion. It is the higher classes who are responsible for the gross anthropomorphism of idolatry which encourages slaughter of animals, dedication of girls and other questionable rites.'

Temple-Entry (With Its Idol Worship) For Harijans Not Desirable

It remains a deep enigma to many that despite Gandhiji's unexceptionable attitude indicated in the foregoing, despite also the fact that he can say, ' I know the vice that is going on to-day in all the great Hindu shrines, but I love them in spite of their unspeakable failings' (*Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas*, page 40), he can also at the same time say, ' I do not disbelieve in idol-worship.... An idol does not excite any feeling of veneration in me. But I think that idol-worship is part of human nature. I do not consider idol-worship a sin.' (See *Young India* published by S. Ganesan, Madras, pages 801, 806-7). It is equally enigmatical that while Gandhiji knows about 'the vice in all the great Hindu shrines,' he fights so hard to win for the despised Harijan an entrance into these shrines because ' in the villages temple-entry is a symbol of equal rights as no other issue is.' We of course agree, but if there is any journal able to view matters affecting Indian religion dispassionately it is our respected Poona contemporary *The Servant of India*, the organ of that worthy society whose members are bound together solely by their non-religious devotion to high social and political service for India. *The Servant of India* on February 23, 1933, said : ' While every move to abolish untouchability must receive the cordial and enthusiastic support of social reformers, we confess we are unable to en-

thuse over the question of temple-entry. There is so much superstition and irreligion encrusting the Hindu temples that it is a questionable benefit that Mahatma Gandhi is rendering to Harijans by fighting with his life for their admission into these temples. It seems a pity that such a magnificent campaign sponsored by as great a force as Mahatma Gandhi and with such grim determination, should be directed towards a purely sentimental and unsubstantial objective. Others, with Dr Ambedkar, will wish that all this drive was directed towards more fruitful channels, as for instance, the action recently taken by the Bombay Government regarding the admission of Harijans to all public places and conveniences. Dr Ambedkar does not want temple-entry and Malaviyaji opposes it. Social reformers do not think much of it.' We agree with *The Servant of India*. There is no space here to enter upon the ramifications of this subject, but in his weekly *Harijan* Gandhiji stated on March 11, 1933, 'I have ceased to visit temples for years.' Since Gandhiji maintains his own religious life without the worship of idols, why should he seek to foist idols on the untouchables? On December 7, 1932, Mr Krishnamurti was welcomed back at Madras after a long absence from India, and the papers reported that, 'asked about Untouchability, he said they were quarrelling over minor issues and that he would advocate the removal of temples, for God existed in man's heart and there was no need of elaborate ceremonials.' A few months previously that fearless Indian critic of idolatry, the *Subodh Patrika*, organ of the Bombay Prarthana Samajists, writing about Mr Bal Gangadhar Tilak who passed away some years ago, said: 'Tilak wanted to make *Ganeshotsava* (the festival of the idol Ganesh) a democratic institution, but he could not succeed, because once he let in idolatry he had to let in the orthodox

priest.' A more eloquent illustration of the utter incompatibility of idolatry and the democratic basis of all worthy nationality could not well be imagined. Moreover, Gandhiji himself agrees 'it does not matter whether the depressed classes want to go into the temples or not.' Why then make centrally important that which 'does not matter,' especially if it is harmful as well? We are quite certain the whole of India will some day come to see that those who fight to obtain access to idols for India's out-castes have been foisting on them, with the best of intentions, what Raja Ram Mohun Roy a century ago declared to be one of the worst of all slaveries and infamies.

Temple Entry To A More Galling Slavery

Our study of Mahipati's inimitable stories and of the currents at work in present-day India leads us to the unswerving conviction that the uplift of India's untouchables can only be accomplished by granting them more social equality in every grade of Indian society, by ensuring to them more economic freedom, by giving to their children vastly more educational privileges, and by bringing them in contact with moral and religious influences of transforming power. With the most earnest possible desire to see the untouchables granted every conceivable privilege that will help them socially, economically, educationally and religiously, we find ourselves utterly unable to see what benefit the out-castes will derive from entering Hindu temples and worshipping the idols there. On this matter we are by no means alone, for it is openly stated that Dr Tagore put the same point of view before Gandhiji who simply affirmed that he agreed it was merely like giving a crutch to a lame man, to which Dr Tagore replied that the lameness would only be made worse thereby. But there is something far more serious involved. For to send India's millions of

untouchables to the Hindu temples, and to the idols there, is to place these helpless millions more than ever under the yoke of the Brāhmans who control these temples and who minister on behalf of these idols. This obviously means that a new galling slavery would be imposed on India's long-suffering out-castes. If any one doubts the above line of reasoning let him ponder over what an able writer said in *The Servant of India*:—‘Temples and *Derasthānams* are so many cleverly designed institutions by means of which the Brāhman exploits his countrymen. To admit 60 million *Panchamas* into our temples means nothing less than a great increase in the area for exploitation. Imagine so large an addition to the empire of priesthood. If every *Panchama* contributed a pie every year to the coffers of our temples what an enormous increase in their income would be the result? All this increase would, as now, go to the benefit of the Brāhmans.’

Two Indian Denunciations of Idolatry

Should any reader of these pages incline to feel that the foregoing is a mere diatribe against a custom non-understandable by any Westerner we commend to them two statements by two Hindu classical authorities, in accordance with the excellent principle set forth in a well known recent publication that whenever the non-Indian feels called ‘to criticise plainly whatever deserves criticism’ he ‘should realise that in his criticism he is joining Hindus in rectifying abuses which have invaded the structure of their religion.’ Concerning the ‘abuses which have invaded’ Hinduism, the great Nandev, one of Mahipati’s heroes centuries ago, denounced idols in these words: ‘They are fools lost to anything good who worship gods of stone; those who say and those who believe that a god made of stone speaks to his devotee are both stupid.’ In more modern times Keshub Chandra

Sen, the leader of reformed Hinduism in his day, delivered himself in 1870 in equally iconoclastic terms. In the Calcutta weekly *Navavidhan* for August 27, 1934, the weekly organ of 'The New Dispensation' section of India's Theistic Brahmos, there was published a striking condemnation by Keshub Chandra Sen of idolatry in all its forms. It was pointed out that a leaflet entitled 'First Epistle to the Theists in India,' Aden, 1870, had been found which was probably Keshub's, as Keshub Chandra Sen sailed on the *S. S. Multan* on February 15, 1870, and the steamship arrived at Marseilles on March 19, the Epistle from Aden being written or posted on March 4, 1870. In it Keshub Chandra Sen wrote the following words:— 'You must altogether abjure every form and manner of idol-worship. Nay, ye should do more. You must wage war with the awful system of idolatry that prevails in India. You must declare a crusade against the three hundred and thirty millions of gods and goddesses that rule the country. Do all in your power to rescue your countrymen from that cursed falsehood from which it has pleased God to deliver you. If ye have found the truth, ye must therewith accept the responsibility of sharing it with others. If ye are convinced that idolatry is an evil, ye are bound to destroy it root and branch. For verily the mind hath its idolatry, and the heart hath its; and if you are free from the one, strive to be free from the other also. Many there are who in the matter of belief and worship recognize no idol; but they scruple not to sell themselves to some idol of their heart which they love so far above everything else. Against this spiritual idolatry I must warn you.'

' Idolatry : Hindu & Romanist '

Under this phrase as a heading, *The Indian Messenger* of the Calcutta Brahmo Samaj had the following

criticism which in a spirit of perfect friendliness we ask Roman Catholic friends to consider whether it does not show them how grave a hindrance some methods in their system are to India :—‘ Christian missionaries come from a distance of thousands of miles to preach,’ and is not ‘the Hindu justified in identifying and therefore condemning that form of Christianity which has its idols, crucifixes, saints, miracles, pecuniary oblations from sins, transubstantiation, relics, holy water and other idolatrous machinery ? If the Indian Christians are returning to Nationalism, let them beware of national errors in this connection.’ We commend these kindly words to Romanist friends in a spirit of brotherly sincerity and in no controversial temper.

Idols Idealized As Mere Symbols

Before we pass from this subject of idol-worship it is worthy of note that the popularly accepted form of the ‘scientific pose’ adopted by the idealizers and defenders of idolatry is that of those Hindus who maintain that an image or idol is merely a lifeless symbol meant to remind the worshippers of the One Living God. Fortunately we are able to correct this ‘pose’ by the help of that first class Indian religious authority, Ram Mohun Roy himself, who found he had to refute this very position in his day. As proof that idol worshippers do not take this view the reformer stated : ‘Whatever Hindu purchases an idol in the market, or constructs one with his own hands, or has one made under his superintendence, it is his invariable practice to perform certain ceremonies called *Prāṇapratiṣṭhā* (the endowment of animation) by which he believes that its nature is changed from that of the mere materials of which it is formed, and that it acquires not only life but supernatural powers. Shortly afterwards, if the idol be of the masculine gender, he

marries it to a feminine one with no less pomp and magnificence than he celebrates the nuptials of his own children. The mysterious process is now complete and the god and goddess are esteemed the arbiters of his destiny, and continually receive his most ardent adoration. At the same time the worshipper of the images ascribes to them at once the opposite natures of human and super-human beings. In attention to their supposed wants as living beings, he is seen feeding them.' That this is still the prevailing Hindu point of view was shown very strikingly recently by the paper *Dharmarājya* of Madras which quoted a learned judgment of the late Sir Subramaniya Iyer in the Madras High Court, who on his part also cited the authority of two learned authors (West and Buhler) in the publication entitled, *Digest of Hindu Law*, where they state : 'The idol, deity or the religious object is looked on as a kind of human entity.' If it be asked what is the result of the *Prānapratishṭā* ceremony, the Hindu reply is that a portion of the god's own nature is infused into the image. Mahipati has his own instances of this all-important ceremony, and it will suffice to refer to the verse vii. 53 given on page xxviii above regarding the image set up by Chāṅgdev at Puntāmbā. More information about *Prānapratishṭā*, or the 'life-implanting ceremony,' will be found in Mrs Sinclair Stevenson's book, *The Rites of The Twice born*.

Significance of Broken Idols

In addition, Mrs. Stevenson has also the following about broken idols : ' If in the process of time the ear or nose of an idol, or any of its limbs, gets broken or crumbles away, the belief is that the spirit of the god escapes through the opening thus made and, if the image were left long neglected, some evil spirit with a vaporous body would enter and take possession of the idol. For

this reason one should never sleep at night in an old deserted temple, nor visit one at twilight, for who knows what powers of evil may lie ensconced within the broken idols, only waiting their chance to pounce on the unwary? It is very meritorious to repair a ruined temple but the broken idols must not be repaired; they must be replaced by entirely new ones. To repair an old idol by clapping on a new ear, or a new arm, would be like crowning a decayed tooth, it would simply bottle up the bad spirit that had got inside it. Perhaps one of the most illuminating ways to study idolatry sympathetically and scientifically is to watch what is done with a broken idol. The superficial observer or the globe-trotter often says: "The Indians only think of their idols as photographs of the divine, and they mean to them exactly what the Sistine Madonna does to us." If such a one really desires to learn whether an idol be only a photograph or not, let him watch what is done if a *linga* be broken.'

Why Idol Worship Is a Sin

Behind the first and second commandments given to the Jews of old on Sinai there lies a religious philosophy infinitely wise and far-seeing. The first commandment to the Hebrew people in Exodus xx. 3 should be expressed in English thus. 'Thou shalt have no other gods in front of Me,' which means, 'obliging Me (unwillingly) to behold them.' This first commandment has in view the sin against God's unique Personality, while the second commandment, 'Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image,' has in view the grave offence of sinning against the spirituality of God's Nature, seeing it is impossible to represent His spiritual Being by *any* material likeness. In its last resort, the sin of worshipping idols as being symbols of God, is the sin of misrepresenting the Supreme Being; for *God is Spirit*, and no symbol or

personification can ever 'photograph' Him to the human mind, since the loveliest of external images is inferior to the lowest of spiritual ideas. The sinfulness of idol-worship thus consists in giving an entirely false idea of God. Moreover, idols or images inevitably mean a petrifying of those spiritual ideas which should ever be expanding, and they substitute a visible fellowship for spiritual communion with the 'Father of our spirits.' Nor does it mean only limitation and petrifying of our ideas about God, for degradation soon sets in. The Brahmo Samaj Pundit Sitanath Tattvabhushan has shown that the degradation of Vaishnav worship 'from spiritual contemplation resulting in exalted feeling to the worship of images with material offerings,' is to be clearly traced to the fact that 'the Supreme Being was represented as of the human form with a female consort, both having human passions and appetites,' as set forth in the *Brahma Vairata Purāṇ*. All these implications lay behind St. Paul's scathing exposure of idolatrous conditions in the Roman world when he denounced 'the folly of misrepresenting the majesty of the immortal God by making images of mortal men... and calling them representations of Him' (Romans i. 23. A. S. Way's translation).

The One Satisfying Image of God

The Christian position is that there has only been one worthy image of the Divine. Its teaching is: 'God is love' and He 'so loved that He gave His Son' as the true 'image of God,' the one and only 'image' it is safe for man to worship, for in worshipping Him they 'will be like Him.' Worthy indeed is the Incarnation that we see in Him, for He is veritably 'the image of the invisible God,' being 'stamped with God's own Character,' 'the image that bodies out for us the essential being of

God,' 'the expression of His Essence,' 'the outflashing of God's glory, the perfect expression of His Personality.' Any other 'image' leaves room for the bewildering multiplicity of polytheism, but *this* true 'Image of God' is unique and apart. This Incarnate One, Who offered Himself for man's sin, meets the aspirations alike of those noble Samajists who long for a true Theism and of the illiterate multitudes given up to the worship of images. Such is the Christian position, once set forth in the words of *The Epiphany* of Calcutta as follows:—'The fact that Hindus have sought for images of God testifies to the expectation that at any rate the Image might be given. The fact that they have legends of the appearance of gods on earth testifies to the hope of an historic Incarnation. The fact that they believe that in answer to prayer they can still enjoy the real presence of some god who, in their legends, is related to have appeared on earth, testifies to a longing that a real concrete Presence may abide. The *prānapratisthā* ceremony witnesses to an instinct that the Omnipresent God may give His Presence in a mode of Incarnation which will satisfy the needs of man. *Christus Consummator* is the answer, the answer to the search for the Image of God, the answer to the need to which *prānapratisthā* witnesses.' Or again: 'Man's heart cries out for some revelation of God, some "incarnation," some chosen way of approach. And the Christian witness is that God has given this in Jesus Christ. But once we have seen the face of the king, no one else will do instead.'

Some Christian 'Superstitions Hard To Distinguish From Idolatry'

This subject has another possible application. *The Indian Messenger* of the Calcutta Brahmo Samaj for August 9, 1931, showed how closely the doctrinal battle between Dr. Barnes, the Bishop of Birmingham, and the

Archbishop of Canterbury was being watched in India as supplying a parallel with Hindu practice. The editor said 'the following had been wired to India':— Dr Barnes of Birmingham replied that "the belief that a Christian priest can, by consecration, cause the Presence of Christ to dwell within the consecrated elements is exactly analogous to the belief held by the Hindu that the priest can, by consecration, cause the god to dwell within its image. The cultured Hindu protests that he does not worship the image but the god within. This doctrine, according to Article 28, is repugnant to the plain words of the Scriptures and it "overthroweth the nature of a sacrament and hath given rise to many superstitions." Dr Barnes added that the belief that the Spiritual Presence can be made to inhere in a piece of bread by consecration is false. About this Bishop Knox wrote: "The real question is whether a belief in the Presence of Christ in the elements outside their use for purpose of communion does not lead to a worship hard to distinguish from idolatry. Superstition is the black shadow that lies behind much earnest but false devotion." We believe Dr Barnes rendered real service to the cause of true spiritual religion.

X

Tonsure of the Hindu Widow in Mahipati's Day and Ours

Occasionally Mahipati's narrative opens up a vista down which we see in full operation some custom or other against which India today, rousing itself from its long sleep, is making a vigorous protest. In recent months there has been raging throughout Western India a violent controversy on the whole subject of 'Widow Tonsure.' Indian women have at last risen in revolt against the indignity of their widowed sisters having to surrender to

the tender mercies of the Hindu barbers the hair which has been their lifelong pride. Now and again an observant eye may discover the following pathetic type of letter in the insignificant corners of India's daily newspapers. One who signed herself an 'Interested Brahmin Lady' of Bombay wrote to *The Times of India* protesting against the custom of high caste Hindu widows having their heads shaved: 'This custom is going out of practice in all big cities like Bombay and Poona, but the progress is very slow and this barbarous habit will continue for ages if not stopped legally. Will the All-India Women's Conference, Social Reformers, etc., try to put an end to this barbarity legally in the near future?' A touching instance of 'this barbarity' is found in the *Bhaktalīlāmrit* in vii. 92-93 where an unshorn Hindu widow announces to her mother-in-law her resolve to go and see the great Chāṅgdev. Horrified at what might happen, the mother-in-law says to the widowed woman, 'The great *yogi* might suddenly be angry with you; for your hair has not been shaven off' (तुझे उतरले नहींत केश). This remark has two values: first, it shows the poor woman was *expected* to have placed herself in the hands of the Hindu barber; but *secondly*, it is equally worthy of note that this did not always follow immediately, for this widow still retained her hair.

Famous Test Case At Pandharpur

On this question an important test case has been brought forward, judgment being delivered on June 5, 1935, for by Mr M. S. Bagli, Second Class Sub-Judge, at Pandharpur in the suit filed four years previously in 1931 by Parvatibai the untensured widow of Mahadev Datar, against the *bhādras* (priests) of the god Shri Vithoba. Parvatibai claimed the right of *darshan* (a sight of the image) by touching the feet of the idol which had been denied by the *bhādras* to untensured Brāhman widows. Her contention was that she, being a touchable Hindu, could not be

deprived of the right of *darshan* enjoyed by other touchable Hindus, including untonsured non-Brāhmin widows. Witnesses were produced by the *badvas* to prove that the ban was according to an old custom, and that if the *darshan* was allowed, it would be against religious sentiment. A *shāstri* gave evidence in favour of the *badvas* but in cross-examination by Mr P. V. Kane, an advocate of Bombay who is a Sanskrit scholar, the priestly witnesses admitted that there was recently no such ban. The judgment which ran to 36 pages dealt exhaustively with all aspects of the suit, the Judge declaring *inter alia*: 'The plaintiff, though an untonsured Brahmin widow, is not as such debarred from taking *darshan* of the image of Shri Pāndurang or Vitthal, in the temple of that name situated at Pandharpur, in the Sholapur District of Bombay Presidency, by placing her head on the feet of the image, that is, by touching the image in the same way as other touchable Hindus who are allowed to have *darshan*. The defendants are permanently restrained from preventing the plaintiff from taking *darshan* of the said image.' The case caused a great stir in Hindu circles throughout Mahārāshtra and the foregoing story which we have taken mainly from *The Times of India* was given in much fuller detail in the Marathi dailies. They reported, for instance, that in his written judgment the Sub-Judge pointed out that while the right of an unshaved widow to worship at Vithobā's feet was contested, no such doubt was raised about the right of prostitutes having such a privilege. He also pointed out that the number of unshaved widows in Hindu society was rapidly increasing which indicated that the growing Hindu sentiment was against the practice. He even declared that the *badvas* (or priests) themselves winked at the neglect of this custom of widow-tonsure by allowing widows the privilege of *darshan* so long as this was not known, and that it was only the fact that *darshan*

by untensured widows had leaked out that led the *badvas* to institute the case lest their income should suffer from orthodox Hindus!

Hindu Authorities On A Widow's Hair

As this series of books on the Poet Saints is increasingly being used for purposes of reference on Hindu life and thought and custom it is worth while briefly summarizing the columns of correspondence that followed on this case in the daily pages of *The Times of India* during June and July this year (1935). A correspondent writing from Pandharpur itself, the storm-centre, said: 'The suit was contested by the *badvas* on the three stock issues invariably associated with suits of a religious nature, namely, time-honoured custom, religious sentiment and *Shāstric* sanction, on each of which the findings of the Court were adverse. As custom could not be proved, religious sentiment went by the board of itself. On the issue of religious sanction a hard fought battle took place between the *badvas*' expert *Shāstri* and the Sanskrit scholar-advocate, Mr P. V. Kane of the Bombay High Court. And here the whole mountain of Hindu religious text in labour could not produce even the proverbial mouse to prove religious authority for tonsuring widows. ... The barbarous and inhuman custom of tonsuring widows is not based on any ordinance either from the *Shruti* or the *Smṛiti*, but is issued by the priestly classes, designed to keep widows in perpetual subjection and servitude. The revelation made by this suit has therefore brought a message to Hindu widows that no sin attaches to them if they emancipate themselves from the custom of tonsuring. This suit, if confirmed by higher courts, sounds the death-knell of the Hindu practice of widow tonsure and thus... contributes to their emancipation in the religious sphere. Added to these boons, the coming

reforms are bringing political rights to women in which widows will get a share. There is every ground for hoping, therefore, that the full-fledged emancipation of Hindu widows will be an accomplished fact in the not distant future.' In reply to this letter an orthodox correspondent referred by way of support of widow tonsure to the *Smṛiti* of Vyāsa (2. 53) wherein the revered Rishi says: 'The widow of a Brāhman should observe a vow of lifelong continence, shaving the hair of her head and foregoing all articles of luxury.' He added that 'thousands of Buddhist and Jain nuns who embrace the Holy Order and even some Hindu women who go to certain sacred places of pilgrimage, get their head tonsured without any compunction whatever and there is nothing barbarous in the custom so long as there is no element of compulsion.' Replying to this latter inference that 'there is no compulsion on widows to shave their heads,' another correspondent intervened to say that anyone who affirmed this, was 'not alive to the stark realities of the question. The widow who does not shave her head is treated as an outcaste. She is not allowed to participate in any social or religious functions. She is insulted at every turn and is ever made to realise her misfortune, and at long last, this poor creature is reduced to such a state that she submits to the inevitable fate.'

The Widow's Tonsure Compulsory

On the same aspect another writer pointed out that the previous writer entertained 'queer notions about compulsion. Untonsured widows are outcastes in the home. They are even debarred from obtaining *darshan* of Shri Vithobā, permitted in the case of prostitutes. They are debarred from participating in religious and social functions. Even their very faces are shunned as they are considered omens of misfortune. What do all these prohibitions

mean? If they do not amount to compulsion, what do they amount to?' Not to be daunted, however, the champion of orthodoxy even brought in the name of 'Mr M. K. Gandhi who himself is stated to have advised "even married ladies to shave their heads by getting their hair clipped so as to prevent any dirt in the head," and his disciple Miss Slade has also a tonsured head. Is your correspondent prepared to say that Mr Gandhi is not a civilised person?' This letter closed with 'a passage from Nirukta, a leading and binding authority on Vedic etymology composed by Yaska, who flourished about 800 B. C. and before Gautama Buddha, wherein Yaska has given the etymology of widow as "one who has a tonsured head." This orthodox correspondent was later attacked for his 'incorrect and misleading translation of *Vyās Smṛiti*, 2.53' the correct translation of which was said to be: 'A Brahman widow, taking the dead body of her husband, should enter fire; but if she, who is unmindful of her hair, chooses to live, she should emaciate her body by austerities. That the word "*Jyātakēśha*" in V. S. 2.53 does not mean "a woman who has tonsured her hair" was proved beyond cavil by Mr. P. V. Kane of Bombay. According to the injunction of ancient *Śruti*s and *Smṛiti*s a widow should either immolate herself on the husband's pyre or emaciate her body by austerities. No *Śruti* or *Smṛiti* enjoins, explicitly or tacitly, the tonsure of widows. ... Mr. ... argued there was 'nothing barbarous in the custom of tonsuring widows so long as there was no compulsion in it. It is rather strange that in spite of various humiliating restraints put upon untonsured widows by society, he should see no compulsion in it. Those widows who appear willing to submit their hair to the tender mercies of the barber do so through the dread of being treated as outcastes or through the imaginary fear of being tortured in hell fire after death.'

A 'Spring-Cleaning' For Hinduism

One letter disclosed the fact that 'in the *Brāhman Parishad* (Conference of Brahmins) held at Akola some years ago it was resolved that untonsured widows should not be considered religiously outcaste and impure, even in any social or religious functions. In short, these widows should be considered as pure as either tonsured widows or women having husbands.' Regarding the 'amazing argument about Mr Gandhi who advocates tonsure for all women, whether married or widowed,' the comment was made that 'no Indian, however patriotic he may be, would agree to have his wife go about looking like a potential Mira Ben. . . . What Hinduism needs is a good spring-cleaning as to its doctrines and rituals. . . . Had Mr Gandhi's views and utterances on the subject been looked upon as sacrosanct, no married Hindu female would have hesitated to get her head shaved, and the very fact that not a single married woman has accepted or followed this advice, is in itself the strongest possible condemnation of such views.' The concluding letter observed that 'the correspondence on the subject of "Widow Tonsure" is generating more heat than light. One of the banes of Hindu life is that when examining any subject, whether ancient or modern, we turn to our *Shrūti*s, *Smṛiti*s or *Purāṇ*s and see whether any *Rishi* of yore has anything to say against it. We have thus cramped our life by innumerable social and religious shackles simply because they are ancestral and ancient. We have borne round our feet this self-imposed chain of slavery to everything ancient far too long. Our duty now is to cut it off with one stroke of modernism if it hinders our progress or clashes with our ideas of humanity, no matter what Manu, Nārada or any other *Rishi* has to say for or against it.' The whole series of letters had been so interesting that it was with a feeling of regret

that we read the editorial note : ‘ *This correspondence must now close.*’

Mahratta's Pronouncement Against Widow Tonsure

‘ The discussion of Dharmashāstra texts in this judgment is useful to all students of Hindu Law and particularly the progressive school of thought amongst the Hindus,’ said the Poona *Mahratta* which held ‘ that the most ancient and authoritative texts, the *Vedas* and the principal *Smritis*, do not contain any reference to tonsure of Brāhman widows. On the other hand, it was found that the ancient writers of *Smritis* were against the tonsure of women in any case. Even where tonsure is prescribed as a *prāyascitta* or penance for a major sin, it was not operative in the case of women. For it is specifically laid down that in the case of all women, in lieu of tonsure, only cutting a lock of hair two inches in length at the end has been prescribed as *prāyascitta*. This shows that to the older *Smriti* writers the idea of tonsure of women in any case was repugnant. It was in the later commentaries on the *Smritis* and some recent interpolations in *Purāns* that we find the first traces of this hideous custom of tonsure. After the custom of tonsuring became prevalent the older texts which were expressly against tonsure of women in any case, came to be explained by restricting them to married women only. This case demonstrates how some undesirable practices in Hinduism were introduced by *Purāns* and commentators and how in some cases older authoritative texts expressly contradictory to these undesirable practices were twisted to suit the latter. This is one of the many instances in which a reform in Hinduism means going back to the original catholicity and rejecting the later narrowing tendencies.’ As we write this, the end of this Widow Tonsure case at Pardharpur is not yet. For after the

verdict had gone against them in the lower Court at Pandharpur, the temple authorities entered their appeal to the higher District Court at Sholapur where the case will have to await its turn. Meanwhile an interim order has been served that worship by untensured widows has to go on as hitherto until the appeal is heard. Some believe that should this appeal confirm the previous verdict a further appeal may be lodged in the Bombay High Court and so on up to the Privy Council in London, but the impression prevails that the whole question has been examined so exhaustively that however many months or years may elapse before the end is reached the verdict is likely to stand.

A Dead Widow's Hair Shaved Off

Commenting in *The Mahratta* of September 15, 1935 on the foregoing remarkable case, Mr G. V. Ketkar, B. A., LL. B., of Poona related the following astonishing occurrence:—'In this connection an even sadder case was that of a widow some months ago in Jalgaon, Khandesh, whose body after her death was refused the last rites by the Brāhmans who alone could minister these. This refusal is reported to have been solely on the ground that after her husband had died some time before, this widow had not placed her head in the hands of the Hindu barbers. The saddest aspect of this Jalgaon case was that the widow's son finally bowed to the will of the Brāhman priests and in order that his mother's body might not be denied the last Hindu rites he had his mother's hair shaved off, although he was himself the holder of academic degrees which he had obtained in England.'

XI

The Guru In Hindu *Bhakti*

There is no figure that occupies a larger place in the whole of Mahīpati's biographies of the saints than does

the *guru* or religious preceptor who is so dominant a factor in the life of every true Hindu. Probably it would be true to say that there is hardly a single story in all Mahipati's voluminous writings in which the Hindu *guru* does not appear in some form or another. It is the *guru* who at the all-important Brāhman ceremony of the investiture of the sacred thread, which as a rule takes place in the Brāhman boy's eighth year, instructs the lad to say after him, 'I wish to enter the Brahmacharya state.' To receive a *guru-mantra*, or the special private and personal instruction of one's own religious guide, was to be initiated into Hinduism with authority and special attilatus. 'If the *guru* himself be wroth,' says the *Rāmāyan* of Tulsidās, 'there is none in the world that can save.' The 'grace of the *guru*' is regarded as the secret of all success. 'Thou art a mother to the seeker,' says Kabir; 'death is lighted up by the word of the *guru*.' The natural consequence is that the *guru* has a position in Hindu thought and affection similar to deity, and worship of the *guru* follows often as a matter of course. With what sad results, sometimes, was shown in the sensualities disclosed in a famous Bombay High Court case in 1862, religious preceptors even claiming from earnest followers the *jus primæ noctis*. And too often has the Hindu *guru* been found to be as ignorant as his disciple. For other reasons, too, the *guru* has often yielded nothing but disappointment, as with the Gujarati poet Akho who compared his *guru* to an old bullock yoked to a cart he could not draw and to a stone held by a drawing man which sinks when it is expected the save. The whole subject of the *guru* in Hinduism is worthy of study in such books as Dr Macnicol's *Indian Theism* and Mrs Stevenson's *Rites of The Twice-Born*.

Abusing the Guru's Privilege

Educated Hindu leaders of to-day are bemoaning the

saddening abuse of the privilege and honour accorded to the *guru* for centuries past. Moreover, the victims of degenerate *gurus* are so often helpless women. Hence Dr Mrs Sukhtankar stated in her (October 1935) Presidential Address at the Berar Women's Conference at Amraoti that 'the methods of charity among Indian women require overhauling. Superstitious and blind faith in *gurus* should be ruthlessly destroyed. Womanhood has not offended any society and so any attempt to treat her unjustly should be frustrated with a strong will by women themselves. They should shoulder the responsibility of bringing round persons who have gone on wrong paths and emulate the brilliant historical example of Rani Chandravati. The example of Sindhu, depicted by Gadkari in his drama, should serve not as a guide but as a pitfall.'

'Bogus Sādhus'

Similarly an article contributed to *The Indian Social Reformer* on October 19, 1935 was aflame with righteous indignation concerning 'Bogus Sādhus' which was the title of the article. One of the sure signs that the new and better India has already come into being is seen in such high toned articles marked by fine moral passion:— 'Their nefarious acts are not as little known as their local habitations and for some time provoked much report in the vernacular Press, and gossip in the public. The time has now come when such *Bowās* can no longer remain peacefully hedged in their former obscurity, and the recent sentences passed by the Sessions Judge at Poona, and the question asked in the Bombay Legislative Council, bear full testimony to the growing necessity of restricting legally, or semi-legally, the practices of such *sādhus* who have amassed large fortunes by the exploitation of the ignorant and the superstitious; and spread out what is detestable moral crime. . . . Linked with the evil of the *Devadāsī* system is the practice of making

“girl offering to gods.”.... When the results to be achieved are rather arduous, girls are offered to the divinity of the temple, and are almost under legal compulsion to attend to the divinity, divinity visible in the persons of the *sādhus* whose comforts are most carefully and ungrudgingly looked to. One can unhesitatingly declare such practices as not only gruesome but as involving a certain assertion, in these days of individual liberty, to dispose of precious human personalities, whether it be a sister or daughter, as articles “presentable and marketable.” The circle of the devotees and admirers of the *Baṭās* does not extend to the ignorant and illiterate classes alone, in fact it is much wider and embraces a few representatives of the liberal professions. On one occasion I could make out amidst the hurly-burly crowd that loitered about the *sādhu*’s “gates” a solicitor who has given over his daughter for adoption to the “holy” Seer, and also a Third Class Magistrate who had come to present the “saint” with an excellent gold watch, which may enable him properly to distribute his time in a businesslike manner. It is difficult to say why some people, intelligent and educated as they are, should have such a strange fascination almost verging on willing slavery to these “saints”.... The ceremonies in the *Maths* (houses of saints) are as hideous as they are despicable, crude rites of a barbarous age. The familiar one is *Lang Pūjā* or organ worship, into the details of which one for the sake of decency cannot go. It would be better for the reader to see it himself and then judge the standard of degeneration.

The Social Evil of ‘Gurus’

On October 13, 1935 *The Mahratta* of Poona had an equally informing article under the above title, with

Work For Educated Women as a fitting sub-title:—

‘ India is a land of saints and *gurus*. The lives of these saints, barring some few fundamental points, present a varied and eminently picturesque spectacle. In the “*sādhu*-world” there are the normals, the abnormals and the sub-normals. That world has its commoners and aristocrats, its proletariat, its middle class and its millionaires. You will find a host of them wandering on foot from place to place with the minimum necessities of life. Some of them take into their heads to reach a particular holy place crawling or tumbling prostrate on the ground. Others take the more easy course of travelling by railways without tickets: while there are the more lucky sort amongst them who travel by special 1st class or even by special trains!... Such a large number of *gurus* and saints live, and thrive, on this theory that it is difficult to judge who is sincere and who is a quack. It is certain, however, that the quacks and cheats far outnumber the infinitesimal minority of true or at least honest spiritual experts and guides. Their alarming number and the criminal waste of human life and property which follows from their activities are positive evils in Hindu society. Their immoral and shameful practices at times shock even a religiously-minded person. The really spiritually perfect *guru* and the true disciple receiving spiritual inspiration and enlightenment from him are things as rare as platonic love or benevolent despotism. From the infinitely small field of spiritual guidance *gurus* has strayed so much from its legitimate and worthy objective, that it has become a social evil... Divekar Shāstri, a well-known religious preacher and reformer, with the aid of the *Kirloskar Magazine* has been successful in exposing by unquestionable evidence the wicked and immoral doings of some *gurus* in Mahārāshtra. He is heroically leading a crusade against this

social evil and deserves support from every right-minded person. Educated women in Mahārāshtra can do much to save their ignorant sisters from this evil which has led to the disruption of several families in Mahārāshtra. I know an instance in which a woman committed suicide on being seduced by a *guru*, and her husband was wandering in Mahārashtra for years in a semi-lunatic condition. It will also be found that the prohibition of re-marriage of widows and the absence of divorce laws within proper limitations, help to swell the victims of *guruship*. Female *gurus* have also appeared on the scene and the scope for mischief they can do amongst women is immense. Several women are believed to be periodically visited by goddesses and they are worshipped when they are said to be in such a state of trance. A male devotee and virtual manager of the affairs of one such goddess-visited woman in Nasik, was recently convicted and sentenced for a brutal murder of the daughter-in-law of the goddess-visited woman in the very house of the woman. Several educated and public spirited women in Mahārāshtra seem to be thinking of the problems which touch educated women only. Some of them should turn their attention to problems which affect the general mass of illiterate women. The growth of harmful and immoral *guruship* requires immediate and vigorous action. It may gradually be weakened by spread of education, literacy and rational thinking. But we must not rely only on that slow process.'

XII

Indian Politicians Who Retire For Meditation

Happily present-day India presents examples of a religious life which are not all on the darker side. Again and again Mahipati shows how frequently the *Brahmacharya* who had completed the 'student' stage of life, and

the *Grihastha* who had fulfilled his duties as a 'householder,' retired from life as a *Sannyāsi* or into the lovely forest as a *Vānaprastha* to spend his days in meditation and contemplation of God. Every now and again we read in the newspapers of India that some great leader, in the public eye for a generation past, has retired from all activity to ponder and pray. India has just recently had a striking example of this in that notable Drink Reform advocate of the Indian Congress Party, Mr C. Rajagopalachariar who in early July, 1935, wrote from Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu as follows to the daily press:— 'A sympathetic Delhi weekly paper has made me editor of the *Hindustan Times*. It took some days to kill this idle story. But the legend is re-born in Malabar with a local transformation. I am going to be the editor of the *Hindu* according to the current story in Kerala'... I am not clever, and I am incapable of editing a first or even a second-class daily newspaper; and unlike some people I am clever enough to know my limitations.... If anyone wishes to know what I am doing he may, instead of making ridiculous guesses from a distance, come and live with me and give me some help which I badly need to spell through Vālmiki and the *Gītā*. I am just now more acquainted with the politics of Dasharath's palace than with the problems that agitate Simla or Ootacamund. I know Kaikeyī's mind better than that of the Justice Party or Lord Willingdon's. I am struggling with my fatigued nerves to unravel the practical meaning of the words in the *Gītā* which in the context I can never take to be a string of mere counsels of perfection, but must be capable of being put on the loom of real life.... I am bundling up letters received and trying without giving offence to let the chain break off at my end. I have sent my Secretary out and, poor fellow! he is trying for a small job somewhere, and I wish people helped

him to find it, instead of inventing big jobs for me. When I go out for a short walk I see men and women in rags too weak and destitute even to pluck up the courage to ask for help. I have read somewhere that life is a tragedy to those who feel, but it is a mighty fine comedy to those who think. I try to think without feeling. But it is very hard. The tears come as one sees this poverty and unable to help.... I would have been agitated some years ago. But now I am learning from the *Gītā* not to be agitated. So I suppress my feelings. I remember that "qualities" of men and women produce their activities, not the Soul of their souls within them.'

XIII

Indian Honey For the Christian Hive

Painstaking study of this masterpiece of Mahipati will yield an enriching reward to any unbiassed missionary. 'The greatest of all mystical philosophers,' says Dean Inge, no mean authority on either mysticism or philosophy, 'was the Egyptian Plotinus, who taught at Rome in the middle of the third century after Christ.' The very learned Dean (of St Paul's, London, until late 1934) continues: 'So much of the honey of Plotinus was carried off to the Christian hive by Augustine, and by the mystical writer whom the Church knew as Dionysius the Areopagite (in the fifth century) that he almost belongs to the evolution of philosophy;' while 'Augustine says in his *Confessions* that he found almost all that he wanted in his philosophers, except the Incarnation: "The Word was made flesh: *that* I found *not* among them."' A most remarkable parallel to this sort of thing is where that great Chitpāvan Brāhman poet, Narayan Vaman Tilak, 'the doyen among Marathi poets of the past half century,' says he 'came to Jesus Christ across the bridge of Tukārām's verse.'

Concerning two other famous Indian Christians, Panditā Ramābāi and Sādhu Sunder Singh, the observation has been made by Dr Griswold that 'their Christianity is fragrant with the aroma of the choicest things of Hinduism,' and in his latest publication Dr A. J. Appasamy remarks that 'Hinduism is like a vast overgrown garden,' and 'provided we use discretion we can always gather a charming bouquet.' This we can do even without observing the clear demarcation between Hindu and Christian thought. Lord Morley once affirmed that there were said to be ten thousand definitions of religion. And as the Western student moves in the dim land of ancient and *Bhakti* Hinduism he often finds the mists lie dense all around him, while guides dispute the true road with one another at almost every step. But one of the surest methods in studying 'that amorphous, all-embracing, indefinable thing called Hinduism' is the biographical method.

Studying Hinduism As It Is Lived

For as we hold constant fellowship with Mahīpati's *bhaktas* (or saints) we find ourselves studying Hinduism *as they lived it*. We see them in quest of God and willing to pay any price to achieve the quest. And with all the vast differences between Hindu and Christian *bhakti*, especially on the point that in the former we see man seeking God, and in the latter, God (through His Son) seeking and saving man, the biographical method of studying the Hindu saints illustrates the truth of a sentence in *The Expository Times* of July 1934 (p. 448), that 'the Divine initiative which is the whole point of Christianity, . . . time and again breaks in upon many a saint of Vaishnavism and forms for him the foundation on which everything else is built.' It is in this priceless point of contact between the highest point of Hindu

bhakti and the teaching of the New Testament that the Western student, and the missionary student especially, will find ample justification for all the labour involved in mastering Mahipati's wonderful Marathi with a view to getting full possession of so sure a passport into the generous heart of the Maratha race. We had noted a score of other points in Mahipati's *Bhaktalīlāmṛit* worthy of passing comment but our space is exhausted. We cannot more fittingly close this Introduction than by quoting two speakers at the International Student Missionary Conference held in Basle from August 31 to September 5, 1935. One speaker very truly stated :—'It is indeed one of the striking features of all missionary work that it leads to such immediate contact with the deepest things of which the human heart is capable. Whoever looks out into the religious world of the nations must immediately apprehend the primeval striving, longing and seeking of humanity which has crystallised in such manifold forms. To pursue the path of this longing of humanity through all the many interwoven paths of human devotional exercise; to rediscover, even amid confusion and distortion, the struggle for the truth; to rediscover the same search for the way of salvation going through the twisted world of animistic ideas as through the sublime thoughts of Far Eastern religious philosophy—all that describes a task with an impressiveness and a power of attraction which only the dullest can fail to feel.'

The Self-Denial of Steeping The Mind in the World of the East

Another fine speaker at Basle stated : 'Anyone who has ever steeped himself spiritually in the world of a Hindu, a Chinese or a Negro, recognises the profound difference of these types of people, and the individuality

which determines everything within them. If this be admitted, then the entry of the European, still apart from his Christian message, involves the recognition of that foreignness, which Paul Schutz bluntly calls a "daemonic wall." The entry into this foreign world with the message of Christ demands of the missionary an immense openness and readiness to see and to learn, in order not to rush into an imaginary world and not to promote the building up of a Christian imaginary world, but in order to see the reality of things as it is, really to grow together with these strange people, to come close to them, to speak their language, to understand their soul, to awaken their conscience, as St Paul says: "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews . . . I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor. ix. 22). The question of adaptation thus demands of the missionary an immense *self-denial* of his own national and cultural nature, in order not to suppress those who are of a different nature, to impose his own nature upon them, or to keep them dependent upon him, in a paternal or in a lordly way (Missions have taken both these ways); it demands his emancipation in his innermost soul from the superiority-complex which is so fearfully ingrained in us white people. The self-denial of the missionary is the first and last commandment for any fruitful spiritual activity. He who has not learned really to listen will not be able really to speak fruitfully either. He who has not penetrated to an inner solidarity with the foreign people will not be able either to proclaim the spiritual truth of the wholly new Gospel which is committed to us. Here Gutmann's call to a spiritual immersion in the foreign world cannot be too intently listened to. And there is no excuse for not hearing this call; rather must Missions repent again and again at this point in view of the past and the future. Out of

this attitude of self-denial there arises. as the first and decisive demand, the thorough study of the language, customs and cultural world of the foreign peoples. ' The student or missionary from the West who by dint of sympathetic appreciation of Indian culture and steady application to its literature has ' penetrated to an inner solidarity with ' India's people will heartily endorse the observation of that king of Hindu *bhaktas*, Tukaram, when he says, ' Nectar cannot be sweeter than the saints.'

We cannot send forth this book without expressing our deep obligations to Pandit N. L. Harshe of the Language School and Mr S. V. Phadnis of the Aryabhushan Press for their invaluable assistance on points too numerous to mention.

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J. F. Edwards

BHAKTALĪLĀMRIT

CHAPTER I

MAHĪPATTI'S INSPIRATION AND HIS SOURCES

INVOCATION

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to Shri Saraswati. Obeisance to my *guru*. Obeisance to Vithal (the family deity). Obeisance to my mother and father. Victory, victory to Thee, O Pāndurang, the Husband of Rukmini, the Unchangeable, the Immoveable, the One free from all passions, who dost assume a bodily form as it pleaseth Thee, the Compassionate One, Lord of All, the Primal Being. 2. Victory, victory, oh Image of Mercy, the Infinite Being; the fame of Thy good deeds is without limit. Thy deeds are infinite in number and kind, and the *Vedas* became wearied in attempting their description. 3. In order to advocate the cause of Thy *bhaktas*, Thou didst descend to the earth in ten *avatārs*. Thou didst destroy the powerful *dātyas* (demons), and didst protect Thy servants. 4. Now in the *Kali Yuga* (Evil Age) Thou didst establish the home of Pundarik; placing Thy hands on Thy hips, Thou dost remain standing on a brick. 5. With Thy sight fixed on the tip of Thy nose Thou dost look with mercy on Thy *bhaktas*. Thou dost manifest Thyself to the pious and protect them in their worldly distresses. 6. Thou didst become Lambodar (i. e., Ganesh), the ocean of the fourteen* branches of knowledge. Thou hast four hands and dost wield the axe, and red lead is smeared all over Thy person. 7. Thou dost give to Thy *bhaktas* a dish of divine essence to enjoy, and on receiving

* See *B. V. II*, p. 443.

that great favour they nod their heads in joy and love. 8. O Ganapati, seeing Thy dance the Lord of Kailas (i. e., Shiva) nods his head with delight, and the sixty-four ^{*} arts wait upon Thee with the cymbal and the *rīnā* (i. e., Indian lute) in their hands. 9. When Thou dost stand to perform a *kīrtan*, all the gods sit near in undivided attention, and hearing the sweet sound of the bells on Thy feet the god Indra nods his head. 10. Thus art Thou, O Son of Gaurī (who was wife of Shiva), the Ocean of all knowledge. Now place on my head Thy assuring hand and enable me to write the biographies of the saints. 11. Now I bow to the Rider of the swan, Saraswatī, the daughter of Brahmadev, the source and mistress of all skill in name and form. 12. She is clad in brilliant white, and on her forehead shines the application of red saffron, with curly hair, and on her jacket garlands of flowers look beautiful. 13. Taking the *Brahmaṇḍā* in her hand, she constantly sings of the qualities of God, by whose favour the poets compose various kinds of poetry.

MAHĪPATI'S OBEISANCE TO HIS GURU TUKĀRĀM

14. Now my obeisance to my powerful *śaḍguru*, Tukārām, who came as an *avatār* in this mortal world, and led the seekers of spiritual riches into the path of *bhakti* (devotion). 15. The practices of *yoga*, sacrifices and religious vows cannot be properly performed in this *Kali* age. Vyāsa himself has said in the *Bhāḡwat* (*Purāṇ*) that many will be saved just by the repetition of the names of God. 16. The meaning of this is very deep, and the dull and ignorant do not understand its secret; so Tukārām came as an *avatār* to instruct the *Sādhakas* (seekers after spiritual riches). 17. Just by singing of the names of God he (Tukārām) cast away all his worldly illusion, and

* See B. V. II, pp 445-49.

pleading in reverence with the Lord of Pandhari he had his body transformed into a divine form. 18. Then the Husband of Rukmini, being pleased with him, let him escape the shock of death in this *Kali* age and took him to the land of Vaikunth (Vishnu's heaven) with his mortal body. 19. His verses were rejected and sunk into the river by the Brāhmans; but the Lord of Pandhari protected them and kept them dry for thirteen days. 20. He was a veritable statue of devotion, knowledge, and indifference to worldly affairs, and he had in him many divine qualities. I fortunately had that Tukārām as my *sadguru* and he gave me the mystic *mantra* in a dream. 21. My mind bears witness that I am dull in everything, and he alone knows the reason why he favoured me. 22. When the sky is full of darkness, the sun brightens it; when the *parīśa* (or touchstone) touches iron, no blackness is visible; 23. when a stream of filthy water is joined with a flow from the Ganges, the whole stream becomes pure and beautiful, fit to be worshipped by the great *Munis* (sages or ascetics); 24. in the same way by the favour of the *sadguru* all my knowledge and ignorance have disappeared, and the pride of knowing arising from egoism is also wiped out. 25. Just as a river when it joins an ocean loses both its name and form; and just as fire burns fuel but cools down in its own form; 26. so also has the *sadguru* transformed me and has done away with my knowledge and ignorance; by constantly living in my mind he enables me to relate the stories of the saints.

OBEISANCE TO ANCIENT SANSKRIT POETS

27. Now before I begin to write my book I will bow to the great ancient poets, to those who wrote their works in Sanskrit as *Purāṇs*. 28. The ocean of life is so difficult to cross that the great *Muni* (Sage) Vālmīki has made a

boat in the form of the story of Shri Rāma, and has thus accomplished the purpose of many. 29. Before Rāma came as an *avatār* he had composed his work of a hundred crores (or a thousand million :) of verses describing beforehand how Rāma would act. I bow down to his feet. 30. I bow to Dvaipayana (i. e., Vyāsa), who was the heart-jewel of Satyawati (his mother) and who composed his great *Bhāgavat* (*Purāṇ*) by mingling the *Vedas* and the *Shāstras*. 31. I bow to Vasiṣṭha in whose family line I was born. May he by his favour carry my work to completion.

OBEISANCE TO THE MARATHI POET-SAINTS

32. Now I bow to the great Marathi Poet-Saints who are direct *avatārs* of God, and whose works are known all over the world. 33. Dnyāndev, the chief of the *Yogīs*, was verily the *avatār* of Viṣṇu. He composed a Marathi version of the deep meaning of the *Bhagavadgītā*. 34. In Pratiśṭhān (i. e., Paithān) when the Brāhman : persecuted him, he caused a he-buffalo to recite the *Vedas*, and when Chāṅgdev came riding on a tiger to meet him he made the wall (on which he was sitting) move. 35. I repeatedly bow, at the beginning of my book, to Nivrīti, Dnyāndev, Sopān and also to the beautiful *Jīvanmukta** Muktābāi. 36. My reverent obeisance to Nāmdēv who was the *avatār* of Uddhava in the *Kali* age, and who composed a hundred crores (or a thousand million :) of verses. 37. Eknāth was perfect in divine knowledge and became an *avatār* in Pratiśṭhān (i. e., Paithān); by his worship of Viṣṇu and his reverence for Brāhman : he made God his debtor, 38. and seeing his pure devotion, Shri Krishna who is fond of such loving devotion carried water at his house with a sling on his shoulders. 39. I bow to Mukundarāj who composed a philosophical work

* See Appendix on this word.

called *Vivekasindhu*. With reverence I bow to Dāsopant who was favoured by a boon of Dattatreya. 40. I bow to Rāmdās who was the visible *avatār* of Maruti, and who composed the *Dāśbohā* and increased the numbers of his disciples. 41. Mukteshwar is a poet well known as a mine of skill who has composed a commentary on the *Mahābhārata* Epic to listen to which is delightful. 42. Vāman Swami was a clever Pundit whose composition of the *Shlokas* is incomparable. In love he composed a Marathi version of the tenth chapter of the *Bhāgavat* (*Purān*). 43. The able Shradhar of Nāzare who lovingly lived in Pandharpur wrote the marvellous *Harurājya*, *Kāmarājya*, and *Pandaraprātāp*. 44. These are the saints well known to the people, they composed works of blessing, and I fell at their feet again and again. 45. May these help me to carry my book to completion, just as the rich supply to the poor teaching needed in their house. 46. For I am dull of intellect and I do not know the skill of poetry. Relying on these saints I have started my book. 47. If these will kindly give me the favour of one letter each from the alphabet, my reputation is sure to grow and my hearers will derive the happiness of love. 48. Just as a child knows not of the work in cooking, but its mother with tenderness in her heart puts a morsel into its mouth; 49. in the same manner have the saints acted; they have brought to my remembrance each verse without effort and have enabled me to write, dull as I am. This is my personal experience.

MAHĪPATI'S OBEISANCE TO HIS READERS

50. Now let me bow to my skilful listeners and let them listen to the story with undivided attention. 51. Though the mind of a listener is fickle, so that he cannot sit quietly listening, still his heart may melt with love

* See Appendix on this word

through the poet's skill. 52. With a eunuch (i. e., an impotent person) a beautiful woman is useless; rich foods mean nothing to one who has fever; a singer is no use to a deaf person; and the relator of these stories derives no happiness from fickle hearers. 53. If a mirror is lovingly held before a blind person, he cannot see himself in it; and one who has not the wish to listen to these stories must have a heart of stone. 54. But you good listeners are not like that, for you know the very heart of the speaker, and are competent to understand the meaning of what is read, though you assume ignorance. 55. If you think of my fitness, I am entirely dull of intellect; I do not know even how to join the letters together. 56. But with true reverence I wash the feet of the great poets, and drink the sacred water in which their feet have been washed, and it is by their favour I utter any words of blessing. 57. Just as a begging student goes from door to door in the city crying, 'Oh lady, give me alms,*' and his hunger is satisfied on victuals obtained by begging, although he kindles no fire in his own house; 58. so with my eloquence, for not a single letter of the alphabet is my own; I go begging from door to door of the saints and sit there until I am satisfied. 59. The food obtained by begging is considered supremely holy by the *śhāstras*, and if a seeker after spiritual riches eats it his intellect will expand.

IMPORTANCE OF THE SAINTS

60. Anyone who longs for the attainment of Shri Hari should concentrate on listening to the stories of the saints. 61. The saints have descended as *avatārs* in the *Kali* age full of those qualities which have been described by Shri Krishna in the eleventh chapter of the *Bhāgavat* (*Purān*) known as 'The Song of Shri Hari.' 62. Or it may be said that the saints have come as *avatārs*

* See Appendix on the word ' Alms '.

to explain by example the qualities of the *bhaktas* as have been described by Shripati (i. e., Krishna) in the twelfth chapter of the *Bhagavadgītā*. 63. The saints live right in the midst of other men; the world sees them; but as many people are spoiled by suspicions they see only the faults of the saints.

IMPERFECTIONS OF THE SAINTS EXPLAINED

64. Are you in doubt as to why a saint should possess any faults? Listen to the reason. 65. A mother has great affection for her child and she puts on it beautiful garments and adornments, but lest it should become the object of some one's evil eye, she applies lamp-black to its face. 66. In the same way, the Lord of Vaikunth (Vishnu's heaven) adorns His *bhaktas* with devotion, knowledge and indifference to worldly desire, but He allows certain faults to remain in them so that there may be opportunity for some censure. 67. If there is a black spot on the face of the child, the mother says it was she herself who did it; likewise the Merciful to the lowly pays no attention to the faults of His *bhaktas*. 68. In corroboration of this matter you have heard the story of Nārada *Muni* who is well known as God's *bhaktu* and Vaishnava saint in the *Purāṇs*; and yet even he is spoken of as a quarrel-maker. 69. Māruti was Shri Rāma's great *bhakta*, and Raghupati (i. e., Rāma) never forgot him for a moment, and yet the pranks of a monkey would never leave him. 70. Garud (the eagle) is the vehicle of Vishnu and ever stays near Him, yet the Life of the world does not neglect him because he swallows serpents. 71. Censurers who are without discrimination remember only the defective qualities of saints, just as a sieve passes down the flour but retains in itself the chaff. 72. Well, enough of this talk : the goddess of speech will only be wearied thereby; but the saints who have come

as *avatārs* in the world should not be called ordinary men. 73. The Bhāgirathī is not an ordinary river, for its source is at the feet of Shri Vishnu, and at the very sight of it, all sins and afflictions are destroyed. Thus does it happen by looking at the forms of the saints. 74. A touchstone should not be called an ordinary pebble; the *Matsya* (Fish) *avatāra* of Vishnu was not an ordinary fish; nor should the *Varaha* (Boar) *avatār* of Vishnu be considered as an ordinary boar. 75. Hari manifested Himself in a pillar but He should not be called a mere lion; and although Vaman (i.e., Vishnu's *avatar* as a Dwarf) wore the dress of a Brāhman, He should not be regarded as a beggar. 76. There are many Brāhmans who are hot-tempered, but the Son of Remuka (i.e., Parashuram) is not like them. Raghunath (i.e., Rāma) should not be called an ordinary king, for by merely taking His name the whole world is saved. 77. Shri Krishna is a voluntary *avatār* of the Supreme Brahma, hence He should not be called an ordinary cow-herd; and simply because saints appear to the eye as ordinary men, they are not to be so called. 78. The saints and good people have become *avatārs* to lag to their heart's content of the good qualities of Shri Hari, and to save the world; aside from this they have nothing else to do.

WHY ANOTHER BOOK ABOUT THE SAINTS ?

79. In order that their lives may be known, the Lord of Pandhan, has devised a plan. Hemadene His instrument and enabled me to write the work called the *Shri Bhaktarajya*. 80. My second work is the *Saṅgīlāmrit* and the lives of many saints have been described in that, but as there still remain a great many stories the Husband of Rukmini has given me His command. 81. Therefore I have begun writing the new *Bhaktalīlāmrit*. Hearers may have a doubt and may question the speaker :

82. 'What reason had you to describe the lives of saints in three places? Why did you not put all into one book? That is our only question.' 83. Hear with reverence what I have to say in answer to this. The lives of God's *bhaktas* are without number, like the illimitable wind which cannot be restrained by anyone. 84. The nature of the wind is such that we cannot keep it under our control; yet it becomes subject to one who makes a fan move to and fro. 85. The deeds of Shri Hari are innumerable and the *Rishis* (Sages) hold different opinions; and ultimately Shri Vyasa joined all together and composed the eighteen *Purāṇs*. 86. But this composition did not satisfy him, because they inadequately comprehended the Infinite One; so Dyaupayan (i.e., Vyasa) composed eighteen minor *Purāṇs*. 87. Were there merely one *Veda*, how long would the Brahmins be in studying it? So the *Vedas* came to be divided into four parts. 88. Were there only one *Itimāṅga* the whole work could not have been listened to at once, so Muṇi Valmiki divided it into seven divisions. 89. In the whole of the *Mahabharata* the stories of the Kauravs and Pandavs are described. If the whole work were in one, nobody could grasp it at once; so Vyasa, who was Narayan (i.e., Vishnu) incarnate, divided it into eighteen parts. If one of these parts is listened to with attention the whole world is saved. 90. In the *Kali* age there have been many very distinguished *bhaktas* of God who possessed good qualities, and who without letting their good qualities be harmed made Chakrapani (i.e., Vishnu) subject to them. 91. The whole of their stories cannot be grasped by the intellect at one and the same time, so whenever any fact came into my remembrance I committed it to paper. 92. In this way the lives of the saints were divided into three books. When the poet explained by these illustrations, all the hearers felt

satisfied. 94. They said, 'Because you have explained to us the methods of the great ancient poets, our hearts are free from doubt and we are full of love. 95. Now set aside your praise and start the story at once.' After the good people had thus ordered me, I, Mahipati, bowed at their feet.

SAINTS AS AVATĀRS

96. He (Mahipati) says : Listen with attention. In the *Kali* age all religions had disappeared; there was no means of salvation; so the Soul of the world (i. e., God) ordered as follows. 97. The Lord of Vaikunth told His *bhaktas*, ' You become *avatars* on the earth, and singing the fame of my good qualities establish the worship of the *saguna* form of God; 98. aside from the repetition of God's names there is no other way of salvation. ' As the Recliner on Shesha⁷ said this, His *bhaktas* fell at His feet. 99. They replied, ' Formerly, oh Life of the world, thou didst manifest thyself in the ten *avatārs*, killing the *dāityas* (i. e., demons), and establishing religion. 100. Now this is our sole duty, that we overcome the six foes of the soul [i. e., passion, anger, greed, pride, jealousy, temptation], and by leading men into the path of *bhakti* drink the nectar of Thy name to our satisfaction while on earth. ' 101. With this reply they prostrated themselves before Vishnu the Husband of Indira (i. e., of Lakshmi). Then the saints became *avatārs* to save the world.

VYĀSA AND VĀLMĪKI AS BIOGRAPHERS OF SAINTS

102. Their lives have been described by the *Muni* (i. e., Sage) Vyāsa in the *Bharishyottar Purāṇ*; but that work is kept by the Holder of the Pināk Bow (i. e., Shiva) in *Kailās* (i. e., Shiva's heaven). 103. Just as Vālmiki had written as a prophecy the Life of Rāma in a hundred

* See Appendix on this word.

crores (or a thousand millions) of verses and everything happened just as it had been written, 104. in the same manner the *bhaktas* of the *Kali* age were described in the *Bhavishyottar Purāṇ*; but the book itself remained in *Kailās*, and none of it is to be seen in this world.

CHAPTER I (*Continued*)

THE LIFE OF NĀBHĀJĪ

A BIOGRAPHER OF THE SAINTS

105. Now you may have a doubt in your mind as to how the lives of saints beyond the ken of men came to be known. Listen to the explanation. 106. In Hindustān (i. e., North India) there lived a certain servant of Vishnu by name of Nābhājī who wrote the lives of saints in the Gwalior (i. e., Hindustāni) language. 107. Relying on the authority of that work I am writing this *Bhaktatōmrit*. Another doubt will arise leading to the following question. 108. They will ask, 'To what caste did this Nābhājī belong? What austerities did he practise? Please tell us by whose favour he described the lives of the saints.'

ANCESTRY OF NABHAJĪ'S *GURU* AGRAJI

109. The ancestry of Nābhājī's *guru* may be set forth as follows:—A *samposi* by name of Ramananda lived in Virāṇasi (i. e., Benares), who was an ascetic of great power. 110. In him were vividly seen devotion, knowledge and indifference to worldly things; and a Swami named Anandānanda came to him as a suppliant. 111. Ānandānanda had a disciple by name of Poharadās, who also had two expert disciples, Agrajī and Kiljī by name. 112. Agrajī who was senior was always indifferent to worldly things, always attentive in his worship of Vishnu, and he sang of His qualities and names with love. 113. He was the very seed of peace and forgiveness, and he was a shining example of the result of divine knowledge; by his devotion he very easily pleased the eagle-bannered god (i. e., Vishnu). 114. His eloquence

can only be compared with that of Brihaspati (i. e., Jupiter, the *guru* of the gods). He was humble towards all beings, and had not the least pride in him. 115. He looked on all beings as on his own self and his mind was free from any sense of duality. He was so revered that even the nobility bowed to his feet with deep devotion. 116. His pupils were Prabodhini and Padmahasti and he led many into the path of *bhakti*, being internally and externally pure on account of regular ablutions and prayers. 117. Hari's worship has nine ways,* viz., hearing and singing and remembering the qualities of Hari, worshipping His feet, offerings and *namaskār* (i. e., bowing), serving, friendship, and offering oneself. 118. Many practise one of these ways but none can practise all. They have been described in ancient works, and their fame is sung in the *Purāṇs*. 119. In the *Kālī* age ignorant beings innumerable have been saved by the mere remembrance of God; and therefore Agraji sang the praises of God in love day and night. 120. Seeing his great love, God gave him a manifestation, and the Husband of Rukmini met him continually in the *śaṅkha* form. 121. Whenever Agradās went for a walk, the image of Krishna followed him, for the Lord of Vaikunth hungers after the devotion of His *bhaktas* and He does not care for anything else. 122. Devotion is the root of *jap* (muttering of prayers), of *tap* (penance), and of the practice of religious vows and austerities. Worship without devotion should be considered as mere hypocrisy. 123. The practice of *yoga* without devotion can never achieve its end, for Indra and the other *Gana*† send hindrances to prevent its accomplishment. 124. Without devotion the study of the *Vedas*, the *Shāstras*

* See B. V. II, p. 440

† See Appendix on the word *Marudgana*.

and *Purāṇs* is fruitless. To visit even all the sacred waters is useless without devotion. 125. The *kīrtan* without devotion is like the song of a village cowherd. The poetic art will never spread without devotion. 126. Even should one become expert in books on philosophy and talk profusely of the knowledge of the *Ātmā* (Soul), still without loving devotion all such knowledge is good for nothing. 127. Enough of this digression. Agradās was a loving Vaishnava who, by doing everything in faith and devotion, made subservient to him the Lord of Vaikunth. 128. Devotion, spiritual knowledge and indifference to worldly things were his ornaments, and so the Life of the world manifested Himself to him.

NĀBHĀJĪ THE ABANDONED CHILD

129. Once upon a time there was a great famine in that country when people could not obtain sufficient food to eat; even mothers neglected their children. 130. On the excuse of going to beg for bread, a mother had taken her child to the bank of the Ganges; while the child was engaged in his play, she left him there, and herself escaped. 131. He looked here and there, just as a young doe does when its mother leaves it, for he was in the same condition, being overcome with hunger. 132. He shouted loudly for his mother and wept when he did not see her. In the meantime Agradās had arrived on the bank of the Ganges to bathe. 133. There he saw a child stricken with hunger and weeping piteously. Pity arose in the heart of the servant of Vishnu and he asked him what had happened. 134. Going close to the child, he asked to know at once why he was crying. 135. The child replied, 'My mother deserted me on the excuse of going to ask for food.' Seeing the child's plight, pity arose in Agradās's mind. 136. Then he assured it by saying 'Do not fear.' And so the Vaishnavas called him 'Nābhājī' (which means

‘Fear not’). 137. Then bathing on the bank of the Ganges he finished his daily prayers, and taking the child along with him he entered into his *math* (or hermitage). 138. Agraji was a great Vaishnava *Mahant* and by giving food he satisfied many. Anyone who was hunger-stricken came and ate at his hermitage to full satisfaction. 139. Vaishnavas, *Baurāgīs* and other great men dined with him regularly and what was left on their plates Agraji had it given to the child. 140. He used to say, ‘ His mother, faced with death, deserted him in the famine, and in order to protect him we have brought him to our hermitage. 141. He calls himself the child of a widow. We do not know his caste. I therefore felt very hesitant as I brought him into the hermitage. 142. Therefore I have put up a cottage for him in the yard and I give him the food left over by the saints.’ 143. Nabhāji used to stand outside and from there he saw the *saguna* form of Vishnu while Agraji worshipped the image in the sixteen* prescribed ways. 144. When the Vaishnavas came to the hermitage, he prostrated before them and ate the food left over by them, regarding it as a holy gift, for no other means is greater than this (for the attainment of spiritual riches). 145. While in the company of the saints, he naturally listened to the reading of the *Bhāgavat* (*Purān*) constantly. Thereby his great sins were burnt up and he came to possess a wonderful knowledge. 146. He could understand the secrets of the heart of every being without being told about them. He could understand the past, present and future, but he never spoke of it to anyone. 147. Nābhāji could also understand what was happening beyond the ocean. He could hear voices from heaven, though no one else experienced them.

* See B. V. II, p. 444

HOW NĀBHĀJĪ BECAME SAINT AND AUTHOR

148. One day Agrajī having bathed in the Ganges was worshipping God with concentration of mind. 149. After the worship of Vishnu was over, he waved lights over the Husband of Lakshmi (Vishnu), and with reverence prostrated himself before Him. 150. Then Agrajī sat down to perform the *mānaspūjā** (mental worship), covering himself with a blanket, while with concentrated mind he tried to bring the eagle-bannered God (Vishnu) into his meditation. 151. He shut the door, seating Nābhājī near it with an injunction not to let anyone enter without permission. 152. Thus Nābhājī sat at the door in obedience to his *guru*'s command. On the other hand Agrajī was remembering the Lord Shri Krishna with a concentrated mind : 153. but the life of the world would not come into his meditation, and he began thinking to himself, ' Where can the Husband of Rukmini be engaged ? How shall I perform my *mānaspūjā*' (mental worship) ? ' 154. Nābhājī who was sitting outside called out and said to Agrajī, ' A ship is about to sink in the ocean, and a merchant is in anxiety ; 155. but he has made a vow to the Lord of Dwārka saying that if He will kindly come to his help in this distress, he will surely give the fifth part of his profit to Agrajī. 156. The Lord of Vaikunth is engaged in bringing his ship safely to the shore, and so He does not come into your meditation. Just be quiet for a moment. 157. As soon as the safety of the ship is ensured, the Merciful to the lowly will come, and with a quiet mind you can then meditate on the beautiful form of God.' 158. At this reply of Nābhājī, Agrajī was greatly astonished. For when he brought the Holder of the Shāraṅga Bow (Vishnu) into his meditation, His yellow garment was all wet.

* See Appendix on this word.

159. After worshipping Krishna in all the prescribed ways, Agraji said, 'Oh Mādhava (i.e., Krishna), where were you engaged ? Tell me what happened.' 160. As the loving *bhakta* asked this, the Merciful to the lowly smiled and replied to him, 'A ship was sinking in the ocean, and I delivered it safely at once. 161. The merchant had vowed that he would give you the fifth part of the profit (if the ship were saved); therefore I, the eagle-bannered one, went and accomplished his purpose. 162. Your daily expenditure is great, for many *sādhus* and saints dine with you, and the merchant will be sending you a cheque.' So said the Universal Soul. 163. After Agraji had completed his *mānaspūjā* (mental worship) he called Nābhāji in and asked him, 'How did you understand the secret of God ? ' 164. He lovingly replied, ' It was through the favour of the saints. I have fortunately obtained a *guru* like you who is able to free me from the meshes of the world.' 165. At this reply of the good disciple, Agraji suggested, 'Describe the famous deeds of Shri Hari to save the world. 166. Many great sages and saints have described the good qualities of God. Now you describe the famous deeds of the saints. There is no other way of salvation.' He added in Hindustani:—'None is better than the *guru* for helping one across the worldly ocean; therefore, oh Nābhāji, with your heart and soul sing of the fame of the *bhaktas* of Hari.' 167. Bowing his head to the command, Nābhāji started his work in which he described the *bhaktas* of all four ages. 168. He composed his metres in the Gwalior language which was the language of his country. Taking these as my authority I write the lives of the saints in Marathi. 169. In our own country there have been many famous saints and in their families there have been great learned *sannyāsīs* and I have examined their works. 170. If I merely set forth my own

ideas, wise people will not respect them. The Husband of Rukmini is a witness to this, for He understands the secrets of every mind.

LIVES OF THE SAINTS : HOW COMPOSED

171. Here you may begin to doubt as to why the life of the writer is described first; but for this there is an old authority. Listen to it. 172. 'First of all, Vālmiki was born and then he wrote his *Rāmāyan*. And had Dvaipāyan (Vyāsa) not been born, who would have composed the *Mahābhārata*? 173. So I first described the life of the servant of saints.' Hearing this statement of the poet, the love of the listeners has doubled. 174. They said to me, 'Hearing your illustrations, we are very pleased. Now give up this lengthy way of description, and at once begin to give us the stories of the saints.' 175. Seeing the longing of the listeners, Mahipati bows to their feet, and exclaims, 'It is the Husband of Rukmini who is the real narrator. As for myself I am dull of intellect and ignorant. 176. May the saints and good people listen, with love and reverence to my stories in Marathi as the Giver of salvation and the Merciful to the lowly causes me to write. 177. Hunger is sweeter than food itself, and so the longing is satisfied; and if there is no desire to listen, then the stories of saints will not be enjoyed. 178. If there is no loving craving, though one hears stories of saints without number, he will not remember any of these and will thus entangle himself in the mire of worldly life. 179. But you good people are not like that. You are expert in the perusal of a book; so please fill up what is lacking in it. This is the real character of the good.' 180. In the next chapter there are wonderful stories and it is the Husband of Rukmini who causes me to write. Mahipati is only His badge-bearer, for it was He who taught me these words.

181. *Suasti** (Peace) ! This book is the *Bhaktalīlāmrit*. By merely listening to it one's longings are fulfilled. May the pious and loving *bhaṭṭas* listen. This is the first delightful chapter. 182. The verses in this first chapter number one hundred and eighty-one, and with the Hindustani couplet (in verse 166) the total is one hundred and eighty-two.

* See Appendix on this word.

CHAPTER II

CHĀNGDEV

MAHIPATTI'S RELIANCE ON GOD

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Victory to Thee, oh God Supreme, Husband of Rukmini, the Brother of the helpless, the Cloud of Mercy, oh Nārāyan ! I am dull of intellect and chief among the ignorant. 2. I am without devotion and without *bhakti*, without knowledge and without indifference to worldly things. I neither make offerings rightly nor worship correctly. I am sinful in every respect. 3. I do not know what the *śhūstras* contain, neither am I conversant with the Sanskrit language. Oh Vithābāi, you know all this, for you can understand the secrets of one's heart. 4. Such being the case, oh Chakrapāni (i. e., Krishna), a longing arose in my mind and so I have started this book, and for this I depend solely on you. 5. On Mount Meru there are twenty-one heavens, and the stars are supported by the atmosphere ; just so, oh God, Thou art the only support of my intellect. 6. The earth is supported entirely by Shesha (i. e., the thousand-headed serpent) ; the ocean is the only support of the ships which sail on it ; 7. the great *Rishis* regulate their good actions in obedience to the rules laid down by the *Vedas* ; so also, oh Pāndurang, I can only describe the lives of the saints with your support. 8. The scarecrow of straw moves to and fro only by the force of the wind, so how can it be proud of any independent action ? 9. In the same manner Thou dost understand the secrets of one's heart and art the Cloud of Intelligence. Oh Life of the world, Thou art the Inspirer of the intellect ; therefore dwell in my heart for ever, and grant me inspiration, oh God ! 10. Just

as a fife acts according to the wishes of the blower, so also art Thou the sole cause of whatever I speak, much or little. 11. I am altogether dull of intellect; my heart bears witness to this; but the people openly say that Mahīpati is the recipient of Thy boon. 12. As I am ever conscious of this, do Thou for ever live in my heart, and now that I have started to write the book called the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmrit*, do Thou carry it to completion.

INDRA'S CURSE AND BLESSING

13. Now listen, ye saints and good people! In heaven Pākashāsan (i. e., the god Indra) once ordered a **Marudgana* (i. e., a servant of the gods) who was at hand to do something. 14. The servant was not attentive to the order, and Indra grew angry and cursed him. 15. Said he, ‘ You have been very rude. You are not alert in serving your master. Therefore you will fall from your high estate and go to the mortal world as a man.’ 16. When Ākhandala (i. e., the god Indra) cursed him, the servant of the gods deeply repented and joining his hands palm to palm he began to sing the praise of Indra. 17. He exclaimed, ‘ Victory, Victory to Thee, oh Husband of Shachī (i. e., Indra), thou art the crest-jewel among the gods; by Thy orders the clouds cool the earth. 18. Because of thy distress the great Vishnu became the *avatār* of Vāman. Having sent King Bali to the lower regions, he made your position safe. 19. Now look at me with an eye of mercy and commute the curse, and tell me at once, oh God! by what means my life will be saved.’ 20. Hearing this praise Vajrapāni (i. e., Indra) became pleased, like a mother who first grows angry with her child and then soothes it with comforting words; 21. or as when a child is studying with a family *guru*, the *guru* first punishes the pupil if he makes a mistake,

* See Appendix on this word.

but afterwards favours him with his boon and teaches him by a review of the same words. 22. In the same way Amarpati (i. e., Indra) first grew angry with the *Marud-gana* (that is, with the servant of the gods) but after his penitent plea he commuted his curse. 23. Said he, 'In order to save the world, the gods Brahmā, Vishnu, and Hara (i. e., Shiva) will assume *avatārs* by means of their portions* in the *Kali Yuga*. 24. *Yogamāya* (i. e., the illusion of God), the Primal Force, will descend as an *avatār* in *Muktābāi*. Nivrittirāj will have the portion of the Husband of Mridāni (i.e. Shiva), and the great Vishnu will become Dnyāndev. 25. The *avatār* of Brahmadev will be called Sopān. With undivided devotion you will go as a suppliant to these. 26. By virtue of the company of the good, you will become efficient in philosophy, the omnipresent Brahma will pervade all beings and your sense of duality will vanish. 27. By favour of the *sat-guru* you will have a direct manifestation of God, and you will think of the whole universe, including both the movable and the immovable, as in the form of Brahm. 28. On the bank of the Bhīmā river is the image of Pāndurang, who is verily the great Brahm standing on a brick; if you worship Him, Shrī Hari will help you in your distress. 29. You will conduct a family life and have children. You will leave your family line in the mortal world and enter the tomb without death. 30. Then you will obtain your former position in heaven. What I say will never be proved untrue, so regard it as sure.'

CHĀNGDEV AS A DEMIGOD

31. As Purandar (i. e., Indra) said this, the heart of his *Marudgana* (i. e., his servant) felt satisfied, and hearing the way to gain freedom from the curse he bowed to Indra. 32. Then a resplendent image descended from heaven, and

* On this phrase see Appendix under ' Avatārs In Part. '

by its resplendence eclipsed the moon. 33. The demigod who was a *Marudgana* came to the world of activity as an *avalār*, and on account of his good actions he could not keep his brightness to himself. 34. Any person possessed of good and holy deeds is sure to possess a superior body after his wanderings through the eighty-four lakhs of rebirths. 35. By the power of good actions a person may obtain many earthly enjoyments, and he will never remain dissatisfied, for the whole world will pay him respect. 36. By doing good deeds merit will increase manifold, intellect will never be imperfect, and a steady firmness will settle in the heart. 37. Whatever a man in the possession of good deeds may wish is accomplished without delay; no one can hinder him whose support is Nārāyan (i. e., God). 38. A man in possession of good deeds is praised by all in this mortal world, and after he obtains *moksha* (i. e., final deliverance) his reputation remains behind him.

CHĀNGDEV AS A BLIND RISHI

39. Enough of this lengthy digression. On account of the curse of Purandar (i. e., Indra) his *Marudgana* (i. e., servant) descended on the earth, and he had a resplendent form. 40. At the confluence of the Tapti and the Payoshni rivers there is a dense orchard of banana trees and many other trees, a very pleasing spot. 41. *Jāi, jiu, pūrijūlaka, pādali, chūpa, sevati, batmogarū, bakul* and many other flowering trees and bushes are there, and many bees buzz all around. 42. In Khandesh at this place on the Tapti river there is a very beautiful spot where the *Marudgana* (or demigod) descended and bathed. 43. Then closing his eyes he practised austerities in this place and did not speak to anyone. To the people he appeared blind. 44. They said to themselves, 'In the orchard of banana trees near the confluence of the Tapti river a blind

Rishi is practising austerities and no one knows where he has come from. 45. His person is extremely beautiful and the brightness on his face is overflowing. Such a man was never seen before in this mortal world.' 46. Because he was so beautiful the people themselves named him Chāṅgdev (i. e., the good), and with this idea they went to visit him.

TWO BRĀHMANNS BECOME CHĀNGDEV'S DISCIPLES

47. Two Brāhman brothers who dwelt in Varungao, hearing of the reputation of great Chāṅgdev, hastened to his place to see him. 48. With a special desire they discussed between themselves, 'Let us go and see the ascetic who is lovingly practising austerities.' 49. Having taken with them tulsi leaves and garlands of flowers, scented black powder and dates, they approached Chāṅgdev and prostrated themselves before him as he was performing severe austerities. 50. Seeing the beautiful form of Chāṅgdev they were very much astonished and said, 'Blessed, blessed art thou, oh creator of the world, for having created so beautiful a person.' 51. As the two brothers looked at him they were amazed and said, 'He should not be called a man. He has descended from heaven. 52. So people call him Chāṅgdev (i. e., the good) and as we look at him we are sure the name is quite appropriate. He has in him the thirty-two characteristics of a perfect man and while looking at him one's heart gets a sense of peace.' 53. Both of them stood before him with their hands joined palm to palm and said, 'Blessed, blessed is this good day, for we have had the vision of a saint. 54. You must have descended as an *avatār* on earth in order to save the world. In seeing and touching you there is salvation, and our wealth of good deeds will increase. 55. Though the words of a saint may be spoken suddenly yet they come true, for by

means of devotion all unworthy doubts in the mind at once disappear. 56. If one bows to the dust trodden by the feet of a saint, crores of families will be saved and they will enjoy *sāyujya* (i. e., the highest form of deliverance). 57. Offering such praise, both brothers stayed there and began to serve Chāngdev, concealing a special desire in their mind. 58. If he wished for anything to eat they at once provided him with it; they brought for him the materials of worship; 59. and even when he went to answer the call of nature, they brought to him the required earth; they were never impatient to return home; therefore they stayed there; 60. and when Chāngdev retired at night, the two brothers shampooed his feet. After the lapse of one month they requested the *swāmi* thus: 61. 'Now do us the favour of giving us your mystic *mantra*. Only by that will our worldly life be fruitful, and our lives will be saved.' 62. Hearing their plea Chāngdev replied, 'I do not know what a mystic *mantra* means. 63. I am a blind Brāhman, all alone, having fallen in this forest, and I do not know what *mantras* (i. e., mere repetitions) or *tantras* (i. e., mere performances) mean. 64. I do not know where I come from, nor who my parents are. I have neither wife nor children, nor any reputation in the world. 65. You find out some great man, and go as suppliants to him. I do not want any such worry.' Such was the reply he gave.

MIXING BUSINESS AND RELIGION

66. The disciples replied, 'But our decision is to abide at your feet and we will not leave this place unless you make us your disciples (by a mystic *mantra* from you). 67. Our heart's desire is that the *swāmi* should look on us with favour, and with that end in view we care not for our lives.' This was their feigned reply. 68. A man who serves a *sadguru* with some earthly desire

in mind, his *vairāgya* (i. e., indifference to worldly things) is false, and it only lasts as long as he is in possession of grain and money. 69. Ignorant men display devotion with a view to fortune, but they do not really love God, for the desire of their hearts is worldly. 70. The eagle-bannered god (i. e., Vishnu) does not like the worship offered by such ignorant men; but the Lord of Vaikunth runs to help those *bhaktas* who are free from all desires. 71. Vain is the devotion of a person full of desires; his praise also is unreal. The store of good deeds of persons with desires comes to an end by and by. 72. Though a person with desires may give up his garments and adornments, and may even wander naked, yet God keeps Himself at a distance from him and all his endeavours are in vain. 73. A householder who sings the praises of God free from all desires is protected by Shri Hari standing before and behind him in various ways. 74. Well, enough of this digression. The two Brāhmans with a desire in their hearts for wealth pleaded with Chāngdev to make them his disciples (by his mystic *mantra*.) 75. Exhibiting outward devotion, they pleaded time and again to be favoured by Chāngdev with a boon (of discipleship). 76. Urging their plea they grasped the *suāmi*'s feet, and seeing the earnestness of their plea the *sadguru* gave them his assurance. 77. Placing his hand on their heads and giving them a mystic *mantra* of worship of the deity, he made them repeat the names of God. 78. But it was with worldly desire that they waited upon their *guru* day and night. In this way seven months rolled on and then they said to the *suāmi* in private: 79. 'Since we entered the family life we have been experiencing hardships, and although we have laboured for years in business we have not even had food sufficient to eat. 80. We have found out that our fate is adverse, for though we carry on our business with so much effort

yet we are not able to pay off our debts, nor to get food sufficient for the members of our family. 81. So we are disgusted with worldly affairs and have grasped the feet of our *swāmi*.’ As the Brāhmins said this the *sadguru*’s heart melted with pity. 82. Chāṅgdev said that business usually gave manifold profit, but in reply they told him they were dealing in cloth on borrowed capital. 83. As they explained matters to the *sadguru*, he was deeply touched and said, ‘ Whenever you go to the market take me along with you. ’ 84. Hearing Chāṅgdev say this they again bowed to him and replied, ‘ We have a large family and it is nearly starving. 85. Every week on a Monday there is a market near the confluence of the rivers. We go there every week, but we can hardly earn enough to eat. ’ 86. After they had said this, a Monday arrived very soon, so they put the *swāmi* on a horse and took the bales of cloth on their shoulders. 87. Pitching a tent they placed on a seat the *swāmi* whom all the accomplishments constantly accompanied. 88. Pain and poverty vanish from those houses where the saints visit, and if one puts his faith in God he will have no calamity in his family life. 89. Customers came at once to the shop where Chāṅgdev was sitting with the two brothers and paid whatever price was asked, at which the disciples wondered. 90. Whatever cloth they had was sold and when they tallied their account they found they had made double profits. 91. Their hearts having witnessed the power of Chāṅgdev they wondered and exclaimed, ‘ Our time of prosperity has arrived, ’ and they again grasped the feet of the *sadguru*. 92. After talking between themselves they bowed to Chāṅgdev and said, ‘ By the favour of your boon we have made much profit. ’ 93. The *sadguru* replied, ‘ The Husband of Girijā (i. e., Shiva) was pleased with your devotion and this was the result of it. ’ 94. That person should be considered a saint who having ability

is not proud of it but says it was all the doing of God. 95. Although all the divine accomplishments serve him at his feet, still he does not say that the achievement is his doing. Though he never uses the great sentence, 'I am Brahm,' yet He (Brahm) should be considered as living in every heart. 96. By the power of *yoga* practices some are able to suspend themselves in space without any support and to make a demonstration of their accomplishments, and all for the sake of gain; yet such men never enjoy quietude of heart. 97. With their own lips they tell others that they are absorbed in the contemplation of Brahm but in their hearts they think of the good or bad qualities of others; such men should be described as ignorant. 98. One may have perfect knowledge about the soul, but life, existence and death are not in their control; that power is quite different. 99. Such was not Chāṅgdev's state. He was in possession of all the divine accomplishments, but he told his disciples that it was the pleasure of the Lord of Kailās (i. e., Shiva).

BUSINESS SUCCESSFUL AND RELIGION NEGLECTED

100. Well, the two disciples cooked the food for Chāṅgdev who, making a clay emblem of Shiva, worshipped it. 101. He offered incense, waved lights over the god, made an offering of food, and with various words of praise he pleased the Lord of Kailās. 102. The two brothers then dined with Chāṅgdev, and having satisfied their appetite they offered a *tāmbūl* (i. e., rolled betelnut leaves) to their *sadguru*. 103. They prepared a very soft bed for the chief of the *yogīs* to sleep on, but both brothers were serving their *guru* in order to accomplish their worldly ends. 104. In this way the night was spent and when the sun had risen Chāṅgdev got up and went to the banana grove. 105. The two business men having seated their *guru*, in his usual place, went to their home as

merchants ; but returned immediately to avoid any discontinuity in the service of their *sadguru*. 106. On the next market-day they took their *sadguru* with them and a larger stock of cloth, and made a profit of four hundred per cent. 107. Thus serving their *sadguru* their poverty vanished and they paid back to their creditors all they had borrowed from them; thus they became happy and prosperous in their family life. 108. For one whole year the two Brāhmans took Chāngdev with them to the market and soon became owners of millions of money. 109. They spent a great deal and built a house in the town, made ornaments and adornments for their wives and children, and in this way their minds became engrossed in their daily life. 110. They obtained a great public reputation, through marriage made good connections, and as they were prosperous their friends and relatives respected them. 111. Thereby their heads were turned and their whole attention was given up to family life. They neglected the service of their *swāmi*, and their former enthusiasm diminished. 112. They began to take care of their *swāmi* only one at a time and Chāngdev understood the change in their minds. 113. Gold and a woman are the two great disasters to a *sādhak* (seeker after spiritual riches), and when these are obtained without effort, the search for spiritual riches quite fails. 114. Though every son has been born of his mother, yet a bad son will not obey his mother ; being inclined to sensual enjoyments he will be guided by his wife ; 115. so also these two disciples had prospered because of their service of their *sadguru*, but afterwards these evil-minded ones forgot their *swāmi* and became engrossed in worldly affairs. 116. Water emanates from fire, but the same water also puts fire out; and in the same way the *mantra* he had given them turned against them completely. 117. At first they were poor Brāhmans, and the *sadguru* had helped them with

his great accomplishments, but as soon as they became enriched by his threefold purification these dull-minded men quite forgot their *guru*. 118. There was therefore no one to offer him the materials of worship, so his mind felt disturbed every moment, and losing his desire for anything he sat alone in the forest. 119. Different men have different characteristics and are never the same; therefore anyone who wishes to accomplish the spiritual riches should not attach himself to another. 120. When the mind is attached to sensual desires, evil company is the result; and when desires are not fulfilled, anger arises in the mind. 121. After the disappearance of anger, greed takes its rise in the heart; then a man loses his memory and he wanders through the eighty-four lakhs of rebirths.

DECEIT IN RELIGION

122. One day Chāṅgdev sat to perform his worship, and when he wanted the clay brought to make an emblem of Shiva, the two brothers were engaged in their worldly affairs. 123. So the *sadguru* ordered them to fetch the clay and prepare it. The two disciples becoming alarmed at this request they devised the following artifice. 124. They went to the confluence of the rivers, made an emblem out of sand, and inverting over it a brass bowl, they laughingly said to themselves and to each other, 125. 'The *swāmi* is without eyes. He is not able to see. We can tell him that this is a spontaneous emblem of Shiva. 126. When the worship is over, we can remove the bowl.' With this deceptive motive they said to the *sadguru*, 127. 'Oh *swāmi*, there was no clay to be found for the image, but at the confluence of the rivers there was a spontaneous emblem of Shiva which we have just discovered. Let the *swāmi* worship this constantly.' 128. Understanding the secret of their hearts, Chāṅgdev

replied, 'The whole earth is full of the emblems of Shiva; no place is without them. 129. Knowing the hearts of His *bhaktas*, the Husband of Pārvatī (i. e., Shiva) becomes small or great, otherwise he is the god who pervades the universe and is without limits. 130. The god Dhūrjati (i. e., Shiva) pervades the individual as well as the universe, but all is really one. Nothing is seen but Shiva's emblem among the movable and immovable creation. 131. Show me at once where the spontaneous emblem of Shiva is.' So said the *sadguru*; and now what did these disciples do? 132. Taking the materials of worship with them, they led the *sadguru* to the confluence of the rivers, and made him feel the bowl which was inverted on the sand. 133. Crying 'Hara, Hara,' he fixed his devotion just there, and Chāṅgdev had begun to worship it when a wonderful event occurred. 134. As the words 'Om Hara' were uttered, the Lord of Kailās (i. e., Shiva) manifested Himself there, and the inverted bowl was installed permanently on the spot by means of the prescribed ceremony.

SIN FOUND OUT

135. As the *sadguru* sat in loving worship the disciples went to the hermitage, and both of them cooked food for the *swāmi*. 136. Here at the confluence of the rivers, Chāṅgdev installed a permanent emblem of Shiva and giving it the *Ekādashini* bath (a bath with *Rudra mantras* repeated eleven times) he lovingly finished his worship. 137. He offered sandalwood paste, rice and garlands of flowers, *til* seed, rice and *bel* leaves, incense, light, and platter of lights, camphor and all materials of worship. 138. In the meantime the offering of food was brought served on the leaf-plate by the disciples. Offering this on his hand to the emblem of Shiva, Chāṅgdev prostrated himself reverently. 139. Said he, 'I am ignorant of *mantras* and the way of worship; I am without de-

votion and without piety. I know not how to adore or how to worship. Oh Husband of Pārvaṭi (i. e. Shiva), Thou knowest this. ' 140. When he uttered these moving words, the Husband of Pārvaṭi was pleased and said, ' You have offered the worship as you should and I am pleased at heart. ' 141. Then taking the hands of his disciples, Chāṅgdev returned to his hermitage. As the food was served on the plate he addressed his disciples as follows:— 142. 'Bring my brass bowl, I want to put ghee (clarified butter) in it. ' When the disciples ran to the confluence of the rivers to fetch it, a wonderful event occurred. 143. As they tried to remove the bowl it would not move, although they put forth all their strength. They said, ' This is something extraordinary. ' 144 The brass bowl could not be removed for it had become solid stone. Dig as they might they could not find its limit, and therefore they became anxious. 145. They exclaimed, ' If the *sadguru* finds out our trick, he will curse us and destroy our family line. 146. We have, as it were, trodden on a snake's tail. What shall we do ? 147. We have swallowed poison knowingly as it were; or have formed friendship with a tiger by persecuting an ascetic, saying to ourselves he was unfortunate because blind; 148. we have set fire to the family sprout as soon as it had come up; this event is exactly like that. What plan shall we now adopt ? 149. By the utterance of his mere word a brass bowl has turned into Īshwar (i. e., God), and it will not be well with us if he becomes angry. '

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

150. Conversing between themselves in this way both brothers began to tremble, and approaching Chāṅgdev they prostrated themselves before him. 151. Then joining their hands palm to palm, they stood before him and said, ' We have committed a great wrong. We con-

fess it with reverence. Please listen to it. 152. Because we could not get clay we made the emblem of Shiva out of sand; we were deceived by the pleasures of family life and have lost the spiritual riches. 153. It was through laziness we made Shiva's emblem out of sand (instead of clay), and inverted the bowl on it and then showed you that. 154. You, *svāmī*, then worshipped it, and it immediately became fixed as an emblem of Shiva; and although we put forth all our strength we could not remove it. 155. The sand has become a mass as hard as stone, and dig as we might we could not extricate the bowl.' 156. Chāṅgdev was choked with emotion as he heard this; tears flowed from his eyes and his hair stood on end. 157. He said, ' I am indeed sinful. This is thrice true. I do not know by what merit of mine it was that the Husband of Gauri (Shiva) [Gauri being one of Pārvaṭī's names] manifested Himself. 158. I am ignorant of devotion and piety. I do not know either *mantras* or learning, yet Mahādev (i. e., Shiva) has manifested Himself, and Vateshwar (i. e., Lord of the Brass Bowl) should be His name.' 159. In his praise he cried, ' Hara ! Hara ! May I now serve Thee, oh Shiva ? This is all I ask. 160. On the earth there are Thy emblems without number, but in order to increase my reputation, Thou hast become Vateshwar (i. e., Lord of the Brass Cup).' 161. After this praise, Chāṅgdev opened his eyes and was astonished to find that he had divine eyesight. 162. Then he ordered his disciples to go home. Ignoring their wrong, he enjoyed the happiness of peace.

THE GLORY OF VATESHWAR

163. There are many ascetics and chiefs of the *yogīs*, but they are very hot-tempered and at the slightest wrong they curse. 164. Their curses also come true, and they render fruitless the good deeds that are stored up. Saints

and good men are not like them, but are like an ocean of peace. 165. If they meet their disciples accidentally, they consider these as God; they do not make any distinction between the worshipper and the object of worship. 166. A *sadguru* with these qualifications is truly great and should be considered as God Himself. If his mystic *mantra* is obtained (i. e., if one becomes a disciple) a divine manifestation is certain. 167. Although Chāṅgdev knew that his disciples were idle he did not curse them, for he was ever full of forgiveness. 168. So he said to his disciples, 'You now go home; I want to live on the banks of the Tāpī river and worship Vateshwar.' 169. Then having bowed to the chief of the *yogīs*, the disciples returned to their homes, feeling very satisfied at heart, for they realized they were free from calamity. 170. They had entertained great fear in their minds because they had committed a wrong and they thought the *sadguru* would curse them, but they now escaped that great calamity. 171. Thus being satisfied in their minds, they became engrossed in their daily affairs, and feeling the enjoyment of sensual pleasures to be sweet they were wholly absorbed by the worldly life.

CHĀNGDEV'S POPULARITY

172. Now turning again to Chāṅgdev, we saw how Dhurjati (i. e., Shiva) had manifested Himself in the brass bowl. The reputation of Chāṅgdev then widely spread and crowds of people came to visit him. 173. Merchants from various countries, the weak, the pious, the ignorant, also Brāhmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shūdras, all came as pilgrims. 174. Making various vows their longings were fulfilled and some of the rich men spent money on building there a *math* (i. e., hermitage) for Chāṅgdev. 175. Wherever God's *bhaktas* live, there the divine accomplishments dwell and serve them, and there is no limit to

satisfying the hungry people. In this way the reputation of Chāṅgdev grew. 176. The next chapter gives an interesting story of how Chāṅgdev mastered the fourteen* branches of learning. May the pious listen to it. 177. This *Bhaktalīlāmrit* book is as it were a garden of tender tulsi plants where the Husband of Rukmini in His creative form is constantly present. 178. Wherever the Lord of Vaikunth comes, the Vaishnava *bhaktas* are sure to come; just as when a king lives in a forest his ministers also live with him. 179. Therefore this *Bhaktalīlāmrit* is the favourite residence of God's loving *bhaktas*. Mahīpati is His darling and sings his simple verses. 180. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmrit*. By merely listening to it one's desires are fulfilled. May the pious and God-loving *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the second delightful chapter. It is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER III

CHĀNGDEV AND DNYĀNDEV

GLORIFICATION OF STORIES OF SAINTS

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Listening to the stories of God's *bhaktas* is equal to bathing in all the sacred waters. There all the auspicious moments stand with their hands joined palm to palm. 2. Listening to the stories of saints is equal to giving alms to worthy causes, and is equal even to worshipping the Recliner upon the serpent with full splendour. 3. Those who listen with devotion to the stories of saints have accomplished practically all good deeds. To listen to the stories of saints with concentration is in itself the practice of *yoga* and austerities. 4. Thinking follows hearing, and meditation follows upon thought; then comes the manifestation of God; and then the attainment of spiritual knowledge to the seekers. 5. The worship of Shri Hari is of nine kinds, but hearing is the chief of all. After listening to the *Bhāgavat Purān** read by Shuka, King Parikshiti was saved.

CHĀNGDEV STUDIES THE FOURTEEN SCIENCES

6. The last chapter gave the interesting story of how the cunning disciples of Chāngdev placed an inverted metal bowl on the sand and how Dhūrjati (i. e., Shiva) manifested Himself there. 7. God manifested Himself in the bowl because of the devotion of Chāngdev; on that account the place acquired the name of Chāngdev-Vateshwar, by the mere sight of which men obtain freedom from rebirths. 8. Chāngdev did not forget Vateshwar even for a moment. He saw Him while sitting and sleeping, in meditation and contemplation, in dreams, in sound sleep

*See Appendix on *Bhāgavat Purān*.

and while awake. 9. He worshipped God there three times a day according to religious rites. Pilgrims came in larger crowds day by day to take vision of Shiva. 10. The intention then arose in the mind of Chāngdev to study the fourteen sciences and see the wonderful effects arising from them. 11. He who was once a resident of heaven but who failed in the practices of *yoga*, and who had descended to the mortal world through a curse, did not require much effort in such study. 12. By the boon of Shiva he knew the contents of a book by merely looking at it once as a matter of formality. 13. You may be curious to know what the fourteen sciences were. Listen to the full list and know that Gajānan (i. e., Ganpati) is their source. 14. The *first* study was of good language, and he studied the *Vedas* with their commentaries; he could recite all the four *Vedas* by heart like the son of Angirā.⁷ 15. The *second* important study was that of law and grammar, and Chāngdev eagerly studied the six *Shāstras*. 16. The *third* study was that of astrology which enabled him to solve the problems of the earth; in speaking of the past and the future his predictions were never false. 17. The *fourth* study was that of medicine. For this art came the *avatār* of Dhanvantari (i. e., the physician of the gods), an art which teaches how to cure great diseases and is called the science of diagnosis. 18. The *fifth* study was that of the knowledge of blood-circulation which enables one to make a correct diagnosis of a disease and to dispense drugs according to the strength or weakness of different elements in the body. 19. According to the authority of the *Shāstras* the *sixth* study is that of archery. [The *seventh* is] that of the use and selection of missile against missile to kill enemies. 20. The *eighth* subject, that on sex-love,

See Appendix on Angirā.

was glanced over by Chāṅgdev but as every one has experience of it, there is no need to explain it. 21. The *ninth* is that of dancing and music, chorus-singing and playing on the cymbal without a mistake, and producing sweet sounds from bells. Chāṅgdev studied all these. 22. Chāṅgdev studied the *tenth* lore, the six musical major scales with the thirty-six intervals and twenty-one tones and semitones, and he practised singing. 23. The *eleventh* lore is that of respiration, and he could walk on water just as other men walk on land; he studied that subject very quickly. 24. He also studied [the *twelfth* science] of how to enter the dead body of another. He knew [the *thirteenth* science], the characteristics of every substance and how to understand the secrets of others. 25. He studied these thirteen sciences and set them forth experimentally; thereby his public reputation grew as he used all these to oblige others. 26. The *fourteenth* lore was that of being able to sit on the *Vajrāsana* (i. e., iron spikes). He studied all such practices of the *Yoga* and he was able to divide the six organic spheres of the human body. 27. When he had studied all the *yoga* postures, the divine accomplishments all became his slaves. Whatever wish he entertained was accomplished without effort. 28. Though one may master all these fourteen sciences and the sixty-four arts, yet if he has no love for God they all become useless. 29. One might study the whole science of medicine very easily, but a drop of nectar which gives life to a dead body is very difficult to obtain. 30. In the same way, the sixty-four arts can be mastered if properly studied, but these are surpassed by love and devotion which bring the Lord of Vaikuntha (i. e., Vishnu) into subservience. 31. All these various arts Chāṅgdev lovingly studied, but they were all fruitless without the knowledge of the soul. 32. In his future meeting

with Dnyāndev he was to receive that knowledge also; but listen to the story of what took place before that.

CHĀNGDEV FREQUENTLY DIES AND COMES TO LIFE

33. As Chāngdev's superhuman capability was noised abroad, many pilgrims came believing Chāngdev to be an *avatār* of Shiva and a treasure-house of divine knowledge in the mortal world. 34. There spread through the fifty-six countries the reputation of him on account of whose devotion God had manifested Himself in a bowl. 35. People came from long distances to the place of Chāngdev near the river Tapti and whatever desires they entertained in their hearts were at once fulfilled. 36. According to their devotion, their desires were fulfilled by the mere sight of Chāngdev; the blind received sight and the deaf could hear. 37. Those suffering from leprosy were changed into a healthy complexion, and barren women who came to visit him received sons. 38. By the sight of Vateshwar the poor became rich and all remarked, 'Such an expert in spiritual knowledge was never found before in this mortal world.' 39. Pious men muttered the name of Chāngdev day and night, and thereby great sins were washed away and all the ghosts of evil spirits (or of deceased Brāhmans,) were driven off. 40. This expert in divine knowledge became known as Chāng-Vateshwar and as a celestial sage, and crowds of pilgrims came to see him, gods, *Rishis* and *Munis* coming of their own accord to see him. 41. Brāhmans and many castes of Shūdras, Vaishyas, Kshatriyas, and men of all the other eighteen castes came there; it is difficult to describe them in detail. 42. Even kings and their feudatories, taking all the materials of worship with them, came to Vateshwar, and saw the glory there. 43. With the glory of such an accomplishment no comparison is possible. Even people with sensual desires felt an

attachment for that place. Many of them came to have their worldly desires satisfied. 44. Cymbals, *vinās* and drums were sounded, many singers and banners accompanying, many a *Haridās* performing *kīrtans*, and bringing into play the divine resonance. 45. In this way the superhuman capability of Chāṅgdev spread for a hundred years, and when death was coming to take charge of his person he foresaw this with the eye of divine knowledge. 46. Then Chāṅgdev devised the plan of having his soul taken to the crown of the head* and his body appeared like a log of wood; at least so all the people thought. 47. Taking his vital airs to the tenth opening* of his body, he steadied them there. His body appeared to be without life and not the least breath came out of his nostrils. 48. In this way nine days and nine nights passed; then death's grasp left him because he compelled it to turn away. 49. Many of his disciples protected his body day and night, and when they noticed respiration had begun again they were very glad. 50. As a sleeping person comes to wakefulness, so Chāṅgdev again came to consciousness, and seeing this wonderful incident the people were all astonished; 51. for he exhibited his previous power of superhuman capability at which the people very much wondered. 52. In the *Kali Yuga* a man may live for a hundred years; this is the saying of the *Vedas*, and he did not falsify it. 53. After the lapse of a hundred years Chāṅgdev went to stay in another place, where also pilgrims came to see and worship him. 54. After a year he came back to the banks of the Tāpī river, and there worshipped Vateshwar (i. e., Shiva) with exclusive devotion in all the prescribed ways. 55. When another hundred years rolled away he once more deceived death, and again bringing himself back to consciousness did many wonders. 56. In this way Chāṅgdev lived four-

*See Appendix on ' *Brahmānd* . '

teen hundred years§ and his unrivalled fame spread to different countries. 57. During these fourteen hundred years Yogeshwar (i. e., Chāngdev) lived for a year at a time in fourteen different places with his disciples. 58. But every time he would return to the bank of the Tāpi river, there worshipping Vateshwar in all the different ways. 59. Out of these fourteen hundred years, fourteen years he spent abroad in the different countries of the world. 60. For ninety-nine years Chāngdev lived at (the place called) Vateshwar and it became known to the whole movable and immovable world that all the divine accomplishments here served him as his slaves.

CHĀNGDEV LEARNS ABOUT DNYĀNDEV

61. A Brāhman of Pratishthān (Paithan) was travelling that way and seeing crowds of pilgrims he asked, 62. 'Where are you from? And where are you bound for?' The pilgrims then gave the Brāhman the news to which he listened with attention. 63. 'At the confluence of the Tāpi river,' they said, 'there lives an expert in divine knowledge by name Chāngdev who has protected his human body from death for fourteen hundred years; 64. at the very sight of him the heart's desires are fulfilled.' As the Brāhman listened to this from the pilgrims he felt delighted. 65. He thought to himself he would go and see this Yogeshwar (i. e., chief of *yogīs*, Chāngdev), for there could be no benefit greater than that. 66. With reverence the Brāhman went to Vateshwar and was astonished to find near the Tāpi river crowds of pilgrims without number. 67. He approached Chāngdev and prostrated before him, and as he gazed at his form it appeared to him like the form of Shiva. 68. All his body was smeared with holy ashes, and around his neck were rosaries of *rudrāksha** beads. He wore the skin of a

§ See Appendix on 'Chāngdev's 1,400 years.'

* See Appendix on '*Rudrāksha*.'

tiger, and looked like another Lord of Kailās (i. e., Shiva). 69. A worshipper always reflects the god he worships, and in Chāṅgdev's meditation, mind, dreams, and wakeful hours Vateshwar always dwelt in his heart. 70. Seeing this state of his the Brāhman was pleased and he prostrated before him and sat close to him. 71. Said he, 'Blessed is the day when I have had a vision of the *Suāmi*. All my sins and fevers of worldly life and pain and misery have vanished. 72. Today my deeds in my former births have come to fruition, as it were. I feel as if I had bathed in all the sacred waters, and that my practices of *yoga* and sacrifice have borne fruit in having seen the feet of this saint.' 73. Chāṅgdev was pleased at hearing such praise, and then questioned the Brahman: 74. 'Which is your country? In what sacred place do you dwell? Where are you going? And on what business? Please tell me all this. 75. Who is the king of your country and how does he rule his people? Please tell me if you have noticed anything extraordinary anywhere.'

STRANGE BIRTH OF VITHOBĀ, DNYĀNESHVAR'S FATHER

76. As Yogeshwar (i. e., Chāṅgdev, the chief of the *yogīs*) thus questioned the noble Brāhman, the latter replied, 'Pratishthān (i. e., Paithan) which is situated on the bank of the Godāvari river is called "the *Brahma Kshetra*" (i. e., a very sacred city). 77. To dwell there is to live under perfect conditions, for assiduous labour is there unknown. I live there and maintain my family by begging. 78. This year there happened an extraordinary event, such an event as cannot have happened before, and will not take place again in future; 79. for the four children of a *sannyāsi* made a he-buffalo recite the whole of the *Rigveda*. 80. I witnessed this with my own eyes, and I now tell it to the *Suāmi*.' As Chāṅgdev heard this he very much wondered. 81. Then

he asked the Brāhman, 'If the *sannyāsi* had abandoned his wife, how could he have children? Please tell me the whole story in detail.' 82. As the chief of the *yoṁis* thus questioned, the noble Brāhman replied, 'Oh *Suāmi*, listen to the story about those children which I will tell you as I have heard it. 83. On the banks of the Godāvāri there is a town called Āpegaon where there lived a noble Brāhman who was a very holy man. 84. His name was Govindpant and his wife was Nirūbai. They loved each other, were both supremely good, and were the very images of holiness. 85. Govinda had become the disciple of Gainināth, having received instruction from this perfected man who was *vurūgya* incarnate and who [after death and rebirth] became born as a son of Govinda.* 86. For after the completion of nine months, Nirubai gave him (i. e., Gainināth) birth. On looking at the face of the child, both of them (i. e., Govind and Nirubāi) felt delighted. 87. After twelve days had passed he was given the name of Vithobā, and seeing the good qualities of their son, both were filled with joy. 88. Day by day he grew and at the age of eight he was invested with the sacred thread, becoming an expert in his study of the *Vedas* and *Shāstras* as soon as he was taught. 89. Then taking leave of his parents, Vithobā started on his wanderings to sacred places, and with inward repentance he bathed in holy waters, even with all his clothes on [a sure sign of reality]. 90. With his mind full of love he continually repeated the names of God: 'Rāma, Kriṣṇa, Nārāyan, Achyuta (i. e., Vishnu), Anant, Janārdan.' 91. Then he went to Dwārkā and bathed in the Gomati river and after worshipping Shri Vishnu there, he left. 92. Visiting all the sacred places in Western India, which are

See ▲ppendix on 'Gainināth.'

well known from the *Purāṇs*, he saw them according to the prescribed rules and then arrived at Bhīmāshankar [in Poona District]. 93. Then Vithobā went to Alankāpuri (i. e., modern Ālandi) on the banks of the Indrāyanī river, where he bathed and offered worship to Vishnu.

MARRIAGE OF VITHOBĀ, DNYĀNDEV'S FATHER

94. The *Kulkarni* (i. e., village officer) of that place who was named Sidopant had come early to bathe in the river. He took Vithobā to his house and lovingly gave him a meal. 95. After he had asked him everything about himself he let him lie down to sleep near the altar of the *tulsi* tree. In a dream the image of Pāndurang appeared to Sidopant and addressed him thus: 96. 'Your daughter is of marriageable age, so give her in marriage at once to this Brāhman; from him will be born four *avatārs* of God.' 97. When the Lord of Pandhari had told him this, Sidopant awoke; and he sent at once for an astrologer; on tallying the horoscopes of the bride and the bridegroom they were found to agree. 98. Accepting the responsibility of making the preparations on behalf of both the bridal parties, Sidopant gave his daughter in marriage (to Vithobā), the ceremony lasting for the prescribed four days. 99. Sidopant then went with his family to Pandharpur where he enabled his daughter and son-in-law to gain a vision of the Husband of Rukminī. 100. After the four days' festival at Pandharpur Sidopant quickly returned, but the son-in-law had a mind to visit Rāmeshwar. 101. Understanding his intention, Sidopant permitted him to go, and himself returned to his place with his daughter. 102. In his travels Vithobā visited all the sacred places in the South and after accomplishing his purpose he returned to Alankāpuri (i. e., Ālandi). 103. On seeing Sidopant he felt happy and again asked leave saying, 'I want to go

and see my parents; please permit me to go.' 104. Seeing his purpose Sidopant accompanied him with his daughter and they arrived [at Āpegaon] on the banks of the Godāvari* river. 105. Visiting Govindpant, he gave him costly garments and adornments. And when Govindpant heard from him beginning to end (all about the marriage of his son) he felt very happy. 106. Nirubai also was delighted at heart on seeing her son and daughter-in-law. Sidopant then took leave of them and returned to his home. 107. After some days both parents died, and someone coming from there gave these tidings to Sidopant. 108. In order to take care of Vithobā, Sidopant then went to Āpegaon where he found Vithobā's mind was not at all in his family affairs, but was ever indifferent to worldly matters. 109. Sidopant therefore asked his son-in-law to go back with him and stay near him, and after much importunity he took him along with him and came to Alankāvati (i. e., Ālandi). 110. Sidopant said to him, 'Stay quietly here until you have a son; then do what you like.' 111. Respecting his father-in-law's request, Vithobā lived in that sacred place, and paid regular visits to Pandharī as a pilgrim in *Āshādh* (July) and *Kārtik* (November). 112. There he worshipped Vishnu, performed *Hari-kīrtans*, and constantly repeated the names of God. In this way many days passed, but still he had no issue. 113. One day he said to his wife, 'I feel disgusted with the affairs of the world, so I want to become a *sannyāsi*; therefore please grant me permission.' 114. Rakhumābāi did not say a word in reply, but she communicated the matter to her father who advised her, 'Do not permit him until you have a son.' 115. One day when Rakhumābāi's mind was somewhat listless,

* In Mahīpatī's text the word is '*Gangā*,' as all holy rivers are called Ganges out of reverence.

Vithobā said to her, 'I am going to the bank of the Ganges* to bathe,' and she (listlessly) acquiesced. 116. On the pretext of having her permission, he straightway went to Vārānasi (i. e., Benares) where with repentant heart he bathed and sat listening to the reading of the *Purāns*. 117. There he heard a sermon on the *Bhagavadgītā* in which *sannyāsa* (i. e., the fourth stage of Hindu life) was extolled. He said to himself, 'Enough of worldly and family affairs! They are painful without end.' 118. Finding there a *sannyāsi* named Shripād, the *sannyāsi* of the *āshram* there, he went with reverence and surrendered himself to him, requesting him to admit him as his disciple and to accept his service. 119. When he was questioned about his former life he said he was all alone in the world, without any tie of wife or children, and he was then given the mystic *mantra*. 120. After Vitthala had become a *sannyāsi* some pilgrims from his own country who had returned from Benares told Sidopant who felt very sad at heart. 121. As for Rakhumābāi, she became worn out by anxiety and did not know how to remedy the matter. With loving devotion she started the service of the *ashvattha* (i. e., sacred *pimpal*) tree. 122. The Husband of Laxmī (i. e., Vishnu) was pleased with her severe austerity and came there as the *sannyāsi* Shripād (of Benares), sitting on the stone platform of the (*pimpal*) tree. 123. When Rakhumāi saw the chief of the *sannyāsis*, she devotedly bowed to him and he blessed her saying, 'May you be the mother of a son ere long.' 124. At this Rakhumāi laughed, and Shripād asked her to tell him why she laughed. 125. She replied, 'My husband has gone to Vārānasi (i. e., Benares) and has become a *sannyāsi*; and how then is your blessing to come

*The word 'Ganges' can be used ambiguously for a local holy river or for the Ganges at Benares; see footnote on III. 104.

true? 126. It is the law of the *Shāstras* that in such a case, the disciple and the *guru* who made him a *sannyāsi* even while his young wife was childless, should both be punished.' 127. As he asked the signs on the person of her husband, he could see that the blame came on himself. He said to himself, 'Good-naturedly I tried to solve the mystery, but the blame has come to my door.' 128. He then asked Rakhumāi if she had any relatives and in answer she replied that she had and immediately brought her father there. 129. Sidopant bowed to the chief of the *sannyāsis* and took him to his house, and having worshipped him gave him dinner. 130. Shripād told him that his hermitage was in the town of Kāshī (i. e., Benares), and as he intended to visit Rām-eshwar he had stopped on his way at Alankāpuri (i. e., Ālandī). 131. 'Your daughter has told me everything about herself and her husband, and now I shall have to go back to Vārānasi (i. e., Benares) at once. 132. You take Rakhumāi with you and come along with me, for the wrong I have done her robs me of all my good deeds.' 133. Hearing the *sannyāsi* say this, Sidopant was glad at heart and taking his daughter with him he arrived at Ānandvana (i. e., Benares). 134. When Vithobā became a *sannyāsi* he had been given the name of Chaitanya. Shripād asked Sidopant to sit outside for a moment and then he began to question Chaitanya. 135. 'Tell me truly if you had any relatives before you became a *sannyāsi*.' Chaitanya with fear in heart replied in humble tones. 136. Placing his head on his *guru*'s feet he said, 'Oh *Swāmi*, I abandoned my wife and came here.' Shripād then called Rakhumāi in and he ordered him to accept her. 137. 'Do not entertain any fear for your action, though it is contrary to our religious law. My command is your authority, and the Lord of the heart (i. e., Vishnu) will help you.' 138. Chaitanya

obeyed his *sadguru's* command with a bow, and taking his wife by the hand he started for home. 139. On coming to Alankāpuri (i. e., Ālandi) he again became a householder, and the people of his caste censured and excommunicated him. 140. As these waves of public censure passed over him they all disappeared in his ocean of peace; he overcame all lust and anger, a thing that was really incomparable. 141. Begging in the town enough for himself and his wife, he put up a hut in the jungle where he stayed with her.

BIRTH OF DNYĀNDEV

142. In this way twelve years rolled on, during which time they had three sons and a daughter who was a heap of good qualities and without any equal. 143. The first child was the *avatār* of the Husband of Mridāni, (Shiva), and he was named Nivrittī. The *avatār* of Vishnu was then born on earth and he was called Dnyāndev. 144. The *avatār* of Viranchi (i. e., Brahmadev) was called Sopān. Then came Muktabāi, the *avatār* of the Primal Mother. These were the children and Rakhumāi was very happy. 145. She said to her husband, 'Our sons are of an age to be invested with the sacred thread, therefore call the Brāhmans and consult them about the rite.' 146. Calling together a number of Brāhmans he bowed to them and requested them to find out some authority in the laws of religion for the investiture of his sons with the sacred thread. 147. 'All six of us will fulfil any expiation you may command.' At this the Brāhmans who were well versed in the *Shāstras* said, 148. 'After entering the fourth stage of life (*sannyāsa*) you accepted your wife; destruction of the body is the only expiation which the great men (who are well versed in the *Shāstras*) have prescribed. There is no alternative.' 149. Hearing their decision he repented, and instantly deserting his

wife and children he started for Ānandavana (i. e., Benares). 150. The Brāhmans then said among themselves, 'Repentance is the best expiation, and besides, he has been purified by his *guru's* favour.' 151. Then Nivritti said to the Brāhmans, 'Our parents have left us. What course is there open to us four? Please tell us.' 152. The Brāhmans replied, 'You at once go to Pratishthān (i. e., Paithan), and we will obey whatever decision the Brāhmans of that place are pleased to give.' 153. The noble Brāhmans wrote a letter to the Brāhmans of Paithan saying that they were the children of a *sannyāsi*, and that they should name the proper penance for them. 154. All four of them accepted the letter and bowed to the Brāhmans, and at once set off for (Paithan) on the banks of the Godāvari. 155. When they crossed the Gangā (i. e., Godāvari) they bathed in it with repentance in their prayers and said, 'Oh Mother, we are lowly, sinful, and helpless. Please save us.' 156. After bathing in the river they entered the sacred city, bowed to the Brāhmans, and related their history to them. 157. After reading the contents of the letter they came to understand that they were the children of a *sannyāsi*, and they looked in the *Shāstras* for some authority. 158. Before the assembly of the Brāhmans there stood with hands joined palm to palm these four: Nivritti, Dnyāndev, Sopān and that store of goodness, Muktābāi. 159. After looking into the *Shāstras* and their commentaries the Brāhmans answered the children thus. 'The *Shāstras* do not give any expiation suitable to your case. 160. But there is one way open for your salvation. Go as suppliants to Shri Hari and with repentance worship Him. 161. Consider all castes as consisting of Brahm and reverently respect them. Even at the sight of an untouchable prostrate yourselves before him. 162. Life is the very same thing whether in a cow, an ass, a she-goat

or a dog; therefore bow to them all in love without making any difference. 163. In addition to this, sing of the good qualities of Shri Hari and listen to his praise with love. That will bring you enlightenment and give you *nirvāna* (i. e., final peace).' 164. Hearing this decision of the Brāhmans, Nivrittirāj was satisfied and with Dnyāndev and Sopān exclaimed, 'The advice of the *swāmīs* is very good.'

DNYĀNDEV MAKES A BUFFALO SPEAK

165. Hearing the four children's names the Brāhmans said to Dnyāndev, 'What is your name, and why were you called so? 166. Have you lovingly studied the *Vedas*, or have you studied the *Purāns* and Etymology that you are called Dnyāndev by the earth-gods (i. e., Brāhmans)?' 167. They then said to one another, 'What is there in a name? Yonder is a buffalo coming with a water-bag on his back. 168. His name also is *Dnyān* (knowledge).' As the Brāhmans said this, Dnyāndev exclaimed, 'My soul has been perfected (i. e., made one with Brahman); 169. there is no difference whatsoever between us and the buffalo.' Then the Brāhmans said, 'If that is so, show us some miracle. 170. If there is no difference between you and the buffalo, then make him repeat the *Vedas*.' Hearing these words of the Brāhmans, what did the *bhakta* who recognised no difference in the life of all creatures do? 171. He placed his hand on the head of the buffalo and said, 'Repeat the *Vedas*.' At once a wonderful event happened and all the Brāhmans witnessed it. 172. The animal began reciting the *Vedas*, according to the rules laid down, and all were amazed. 173. The buffalo recited all the four *Vedas* which made the Brāhmans very happy and they said, 'Such a miracle has never been seen before in the mortal world. 174. We have studied all the

Upanishads and also the *Vedānta*, yet we do not have any such power. 175. These children are in truth the boats (for going to the better land). They are the divine trinity. What have *they* got to do with penance? They have come as *avatārs* to this world to save it. 176. We preach to others a good deal, but we do not practise what we preach. Our whole lives have been wasted in craving after public respect.' 177. With such deep repentance the Brāhman bowed prostrate before these children, but Dnyāndev raised them up and clasped their feet. 178. With love and reverence he explained, 'It was through the power that comes from the feet of you *Swāmīs*. We do not possess any power at all; Shri Ātmārām (i. e., God) knows this.'

EFFECT ON CHĀNGDEV OF DNYĀNDEV'S MIRACLE

179. Ye fortunate listeners, remember the context that the Brāhman of Paithan was relating the story to Chāngdev. 180. The Brāhman of Paithan said, 'Such was the wonderful deed he performed. I witnessed with my own eyes the miracle I have now related to you.' 181. At this wonderful account Chāngdev felt greatly astonished and tears flowed from his eyes. 182. He said, 'I too have studied deeply, having learnt by heart the fourteen sciences and the sixty-four arts, but I do not possess such power as this. 183. I have cheated death and have lived for fourteen centuries*; but though I have performed wonders by dint of superhuman power, this power (of Dnyāndev's) is not in me.' 184. The Brāhman added: 'I have to tell you about another wonderful event, which please listen to it with reverence. 185. Nivritti, Dnyāndev, Sopān and Muktābāi were staying at the house of a Brāhman in peace. 186. He was very devoted, generous and righteous. Recognizing these children as the *avatārs*

* See Appendix on 'Chāngdev's 1,400 years.'

of God, he treated them with reverence. 187. He gave them dinner and lunch of various kinds, and at night there was a *kīrtan* (i. e., a song-service) at his house and many people came to listen.'

ANCESTORS ATTEND A FEAST

188. 'After a month had passed the day came to celebrate the anniversary of his ancestors, and making preparations for that purpose he went to invite Brāhmans. 189. He said, "Today is the sacred anniversary of my ancestors, so please come and dine at my house." As the gentleman said this the priest replied, 190. "But you have given shelter to the children of a *sannyāsi*, and thereby the social laws are violated, for many go to listen to their song-services. 191. So we shall not come to your house to dine." At the priest's reply, the man became very anxious. 192. Returning to his house he sat still with an anxious heart. Dnyānrāj (i. e., Dnyāndev) then asked him the reason of his perplexity. 193. He replied, "Today is the anniversary of my ancestors, but the Brāhmans will not come to my house to dine, and therefore I am exceedingly worried." 194. As Dnyāndev was the visible *avatār* of Vishnu Himself, he could understand the secrets of every heart, so he said, "It is because we stay at your house that you have been put out of caste. 195. But let not your mind be dejected. Have the cooking done, and by the favour of Shri *Sadguru* Nivritti, your ancestors themselves will come to dine." 196. At these assuring words the man was delighted. He got several dishes cooked and made preparations for the worship. 197. *Til* seeds and the sacred grass, the *tulsī* leaves and flowers, barley, rice and white clay, as well as pairs of *dhotars* (i. e., pieces of cloth worn round the waist) and gold coins for offering were all made ready. 198. After the host had bathed he arranged the seats for his ancestors, and

as soon as it was midday a wonderful thing happened. 199. As soon as Dnyāndev said, " Please come," this miracle took place. All the ancestors of the man came there in visible form with loving devotion. 200. Janārdan (i. e., God) in the form of the ancestors came and occupied the seats. Then reciting *mantras* according to religious rites the man worshipped his ancestors. 201. At the sound of the recitation of the Vedic *mantras* the Brāhmans of the town were very much astonished. They climbed the upper stories and terraces of their houses and gazed on what was happening; 202. on seeing the ancestors of the man dining in their visible human form they exclaimed, " Dnyāndev is truly the supreme Brahma incarnate, and wonderful are his actions. 203. He caused an animal to recite the *Vedas*, and now he has made the deceased ancestors come to the world in visible form. He has come as an *avatār* among the saints to save the world. 204. We have been proud of our religiosity and needlessly rejected the invitation. So the ancestors themselves came and took away the *dakshinā* (i. e., the money offered as gifts to Brāhmans)." 205. Well, to continue our narration. According to religious rites the man worshipped his ancestors who ate only the dishes they liked : such is the glory of the saints. 206. When all were satisfied they were given water to wash their hands, and rolled betelnut leaves and money offerings. And at the words, " Please go back to your own places," they departed. 207. All the great Brāhmans of Paithan said in praise, " Oh Dnyāndev, the limit of your power is not known even by Viranchi (i. e., Brahmadev) or by Hara (i. e., Shiva). " 208. Living in Paithan for two months, Dnyāndev explained the *Vedānta* and at night performed song-services, and thus by love attracted the people of Paithan. 209. The buffalo that recited the *Vedas* was asked from the Brāhmans, and then all four of them

returned to Ālandī after having taken leave of all at Paithan.' 210. The Brāhman (of Paithan) further said to Chāṅgdev, 'It is only one month since these things took place; after witnessing them with my own eyes, I came to visit you.' 211. As Chāṅgdev heard the narrative of the Brāhman he said, 'Wonderful is the *īlā* (i. e., creative power) of God, each deed excelling the one before it' 212. When Nārada became very proud of his skill in singing, Shri Krishna made a bear sing all the tunes. 213. The ocean thought that its bed was certainly the largest, until the great sage Agastī swallowed it up at one gulp. 214. Brahmadev thought himself to be the only creator of the world, until the sage Viśhvāmītra made everything by his own creation. 215. Satyabhāmā (Krishna's wife) was very proud of her own beauty; but her pride vanished when Rukminī took the form of Jānakī (Rama's wife). 216. In the same manner, I was proud of my own superhuman power and lived for fourteen centuries, but my mind has been overwhelmed, on hearing the extraordinary power of Dnyāndev.' 217. It all forms part of the *Bhaktalīlāmṛit* which the Husband of Rukminī causes me to write. I, Mahipati, am only His bard singing His good qualities. 218. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmṛit*. By merely listening to it, one's heart's desires are fulfilled. May the pious and loving *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the third delightful chapter

CHAPTER IV

CHĀNGDEV AND DNYĀNDEV

(*Continued*)

MEASURELESS FAME OF GOD'S *BHAKTAS*

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. With large scales the earth can be easily weighed, but the reputation of God's *bhaktas* cannot be adequately described. 2. The roar of an ocean is very great, yet even that can be competed with; but in singing of the fame of God's *bhaktas*, poets fail miserably. 3. Wind is very fickle, yet even it cannot be caged; but the state of the servants of Vishnu is without comparison, and speech wearies in describing it. 4. Even should the sky be supported, or the sun be made to stand still while setting, it would yet be quite impossible to write fully the lives of God's *bhaktas*. 5. Even were it possible to count the blades of grass on the earth, the various achievements of God's would remain innumerable. 6. For so limitless is their fame that the intellect of great poets is wearied in describing it; therefore for one dull of intellect as I am, it is boastful prattle; may the saints pardon my mistake. 7. A darling child babbles something without meaning before its mother, and she makes much of it, for she is overcome by love; 8. a servant who executes his master's order is liked by the master, but when a wiseacre contradicts his master, the latter dislikes the very sight of him; 9. likewise, in spite of my ignorance, the Husband of Rukmini is pleased with me, and has given in my charge the secret store of the lives of the saints. 10. He constantly stays in my heart, and I write only as much as he bids me, never having any other thought.

CHĀNGDEV A REPENTANT SUPPLIANT

11. In the last chapter there was the story of the Brāhman of Paithan relating to Chāngdev the life of Dnyāndev; 12. how he made a buffalo recite the *Vedas*, bringing to the mortal world the dead ancestors of their host; and hearing this great fame of his how the *Marudgana* (i. e., Chāngdev) felt astonished at heart. 13. Doubt arose in Chāngdev's heart whether to regard the story as true or false; therefore controlling his breath, he concentrated his mind and sat in meditation. 14. The chief of the *Yogīs* was trying to see in his meditation the events which had taken place in the universe, and he became convinced in his mind that these were the *avatārs* of the three principal gods. 15. He was also convinced of the fact of Dnyāndev causing a buffalo to recite the *Vedas* in Pratishtān (i. e., Paithan) and his bringing to the mortal world the dead ancestors of his host. 16. The chief of the *Yogīs* making himself one with the universe, saw these events in his meditation and was convinced of them, and then he came back to consciousness. 17. There were gathered there a large number of his disciples and also pilgrims without number. Laying aside his pride Chāngdev addressed them thus : 18. 'Please listen, all of you, to my former fate. Seeing a wrong had been done by me, the god Indra cursed me. 19. But afterwards Purandara (i. e., Indra) was pleased with me and commuted the curse, saying that there would be *avatārs* of the three gods on earth; 20. and that I should go as a suppliant to them and then become free from my curse, and going back into heaven I would enjoy my former happiness. 21. So said Purandara (i. e., Indra), and I descended on the earth, and by practising *Yoga* here I showed many marvellous results arising from superhuman power. 22. With the intention of seeing Dnyāndev's feet, I kept my body alive for fourteen centuries, and now

that he has come as an *avatār* I must go and see him.' 23. Hearing these words of Chāngdev his disciples felt very anxious. They said to themselves, 'As soon as the *Swāmi* sees Dnyāndev he will obtain *Moksha* (i. e., final deliverance or salvation). 24. In his company we get full satisfaction and obtain many delicious things to eat.' So they tried to persuade Chāngdev with gentle words and to impede his going. 25. As (king) Bali was on the point of supplicating himself to Vāman (the fifth *avatār* of Vishnu), Shukra* became anxious, for if God gave him *moksha* (salvation), he wondered who would protect his (Shukra's) family ? 26. Therefore, just as when Bali was going to pour water on Vāman's hand [the sign of completing the promise of giving anything] his action had been impeded by the *Kaṇi* (Shukra),* and in the same way the disciples of Chāngdev now devised the following plan. 27. Said they, 'At merely hearing of the fame of another, you need not leave your own place. That would harm your greatness and lower you in the estimation of others. 28. There are several ways of showing superhuman power, and different *yogīs* have different ways. Therefore, we will submit a plan and if the *Swāmi* listens to it, it will be well. 29. First of all write a letter to Dnyāndev in your own hand and when you have a reply, determine your course.'

CHĀNGDEV'S BLANK LETTER TO DNYĀNDEV

30. The chief of the *yogīs* relished this plan, and getting an ink-pot and a pen he sat thinking to himself. 31. Taking a paper in his hand, he thought of how to write. He said to himself, 'If I write to him considering him as greater than myself, it would be unfitting because he is younger. 32. If I write to him as to an

* See Appendix on ' Shukra ' for the meaning of the allusions in verses 25-26.

inferior (I shall err) as he has performed extraordinary deeds. Fire should not be called small, for with fuel it becomes very large. 33. Vāsuki king of serpents must not be called an ordinary reptile, for he has sustained the weight of the earth on his head. Nor should the wish-cow be considered an ordinary cow. 34. Although the Ganges is very tiny at the source, still its waters help to fill the ocean. Although Garud the eagle is like an ordinary bird, still he carries Vishnu on his back. 35. Rāma, the child of Dashrath, punished even the ten-headed demon. Shri Krishna, the infant child of Yashodā, held the Govardhan mountain on the tip of His nail. 36. The Supreme Brahm is smaller than an atom, but in its pores are the three worlds. In the same manner, although Dnyāndev is young in years, still he has shown superhuman powers.* 37. Therefore, not knowing how to write the letter, he sent by two of his disciples just the blank paper. 38. After being silent for some moments he said to himself that as he did not know how to write to Dnyāndev he would give them a blank sheet of paper. 39. He told his disciples to go to Āland and learn what was the condition of the four (who lived there); 40. also to find out the deity they worshipped and the method of their devotion; how they performed their ablutions and prayers, and also to find out what manifestations they had; 41. the sciences they had studied and the methods of their study; which *Purāṇ* they listened to and thought over; observe all these things; 42. their kindness to other beings; how they thought of the *Māyā* (illusion) of Vishnu; which *yoga* they practised to curb their sense organs, and what were their austerities; 43. their behaviour in public, the way in which they maintained themselves, and their accomplishments; all this they should try to understand; 44. their knowledge of all the arts and crafts, the way they behaved and the accomplishments they exhibited before the public eye. 45. In-

structing his disciples in this way, he placed the letter in their hands and said, 'Go quickly to Ālandī, and come back with the reply. 46. Give my respectful *namaskārs* to the three *avātārs* of God, Nivrīttī, Dnyāndev and Sopān, and also to Muktabāi.' 47. Instructing them in this fashion, he placed his hand on their heads. They then bowed to him and both of them set off. 48. With love in their hearts they remembered the name of Chāngdev and thereby all desires were fulfilled, and their souls felt happy. 49. They did not forget their *sadguru* while they sat or slept, while they dined or were wakeful, while in dreamless sleep or in dreams. 50. One *ghatikā* [24 minutes] after they had started, Chāngdev employed his special art, so they suddenly arrived at Alandī, but did not quite recognise it. 51. The Brāhmins asked the men of the town its name, and about the river flowing there. 52. The townspeople told them that the town was called Alankāpur (i.e., Ālandī), that the river yonder was the sacred Indrāyanī, and that the glory of the whole place was very great. 53. Very much astonished in their minds, they asked the townspeople how far Taptī-Chāngdev was from there. 54. The townspeople replied that Taptī-Chāngdev was thirty-eight *gojanis* [a *gojan* being 8 miles the whole distance was thus 304 miles] from that place, and that they also had gone there to see Chāngdev. 55. ' Why are you surprised that you have covered three hundred miles in a *ghatikā* ? Your *śāstru* has that power. We ourselves have witnessed it. ' 56. In this way the men of the sacred town spoke to the disciples (of Chāngdev). Then the two Brāhmins bathed in the Indrāyanī. 57. After performing their usual worship, they then entered the town and were very eager to visit Dnyāndev. 58. On their way they saw a Brāhman who appeared like Vishnu himself, so they asked him to show them the house where Dnyāndev lived.

59. Having learned the signs of his hermitage they hastened towards it. There they saw a great wonder : listen to it. 60. As soon as Dnyāndev saw the disciples of Chāṅgdev, he at once knew their purpose and quite naturally said to Nivrīti, ' Please listen with attention to what I have to say. 61. It seems we are to see that Chāṅgdev for whose sake we have assumed our *avatārs* in this mortal world. 62. Vateshwar (i. e., Chāṅgdev) is an adept in divine knowledge, and a superman. He has sent two of his disciples with a letter which is blank.' 63. As Dnyāneshwar was saying this they arrived and both Brāhmans went near him and prostrated themselves before him. 64. Dnyānrāj at once said to them, ' You have come from the Tapti, and Chāṅgdev has sent me a blank letter.' 65. As the Brāhmans heard him they were very much astonished and said, ' You are the very statue of the supreme Brahm and you know the secrets of our hearts. 66. Without our telling you, you have made out our mission. You three are indeed the *avatārs* of the three gods, and you have come to save the world. 67. Your power is even greater than we had heard.' Then taking out the blank paper, they placed it before him. 68. As Dnyāndev looked at it he noticed it was blank on both sides. Then he told Nivrīti that not a single letter was written on it. 69. ' Oh *Swami*, tell me at once what reason he had for sending such a letter.'

NIVRITTI DESCRIBES CHĀNGDEV

70. Hearing this Nivrīti replied, ' This is the *avatār* of a *Marudgana** (i. e., one of the 49 immortals) and is known as Chāṅgā-Vateshwar. He has descended into the world of activity. Listen to his story. 71. He studied the fourteen sciences and became an expert in the sixty-four arts. He practised the eightfold *yoga*, and made the divine accomplishments subject to him. 72. As death

* See Appendix on ' *Marudgana*.'

struck him, he carried his soul to the region of Brahm and thus he cheated death for fourteen centuries and protected his body. 73. Such is Chāṅgdev who is a great *siddha* (i. e., perfected in philosophic meditation and asceticism). His limits are not known even to Brahmadev and others. He can read the secrets of every heart, and can hear the message of heaven. 74. With a mighty effort he protected his body from death for fourteen centuries and he is full of pride concerning his superhuman powers inwardly and outwardly. 75. But even in his dreams the supreme divine knowledge does not come to him. He is blind about that and so all his other powers are without any value. 76. A widow without saffron on her forehead may put on all sorts of ornaments, but if around her neck there is no necklace of glass beads, she looks ugly to the public eye. 77. Even if all the stars arise in the sky, but if the moon is not in the midst of them, the night does not look beautiful: such is the condition of Chāṅgdev. 78. There may be elephants, horses, fine chariots and foot-soldiers without number in an army, but if the king is not seen in the midst of them, the whole army is without the least value. 79. People may find one who possesses large and beautiful eyes like the petals of a lotus flower, but if he is not able to see, then what is the use? This was the state of Chāṅgdev. 80. A body may have a beautiful complexion and may be young and endowed with all the thirty-two manly qualities, but if it is without life, then who would retain it? 81. So is the *Yogi Vateshwar* (i. e., Chāṅgdev). All the divine accomplishments are favourable to him. But he lacks the knowledge of the soul and so he has protected his body for nothing. 82. His mere knowledge is quite superfluous and even that is full of pride; just as if there be a pitcher of cow's milk, and someone puts a little salt in; 83. or as if one is eating some delicious dish, and in the meantime a fly falls in it un-

known to the eater; and the food is rendered indigestible; in the same way, pride harms knowledge. 84. No doubt Chāṅgdev is a great *yogi*, but he is so proud of his superhuman powers, that when he heard of your reputation he had an earnest longing to see you. 85. But when Chāṅgdev took a pen in his hand to write you a letter he could not use his intellect because he was thinking only of superiority and inferiority. 86. In this state of perplexity he gave a blank letter and I will explain this action of his. 87. He is an adept in superhuman powers, but he is equally blank about the supreme knowledge of Brahm. What I think is that the letter is in consonance with his own blankness. 88. But you, the ocean of knowing, you are a skilful speaker of eternal truths. Therefore, write such a letter to Chāṅgdev as will enlighten his mind.'

DNYĀNDEV'S REPLY IN 'CHĀNGDEV PĀSASHĪ'

89. Hearing the words of his *satguru* (i. e., Nivrītti) Dnyāndev made him a *namaskār*. Then he wrote at once with his own hand as a letter the work called *Pāsashī*. 90. Its meaning is very profound. It acquaints one with the established doctrines of philosophy. I shall explain it in brief. May good people listen to it with love. 91. 'Swasti (Peace)'. To Shri Chāṅgdev Vateshwar! The Supreme Brahm pervades the movable and the immovable, and is without a second. There is no idea of duality even in a dream. 92. Whom does the body belong to? Who dwells in the body? Think within yourself, with heart and mind fully concentrated. 93. The practice of *yoga* is very bothersome; but it can be accomplished, and thereby one is in possession of the divine accomplishments, *Riddhi* and *Siddhi*; but the attainment of the Supreme Brahma cannot thereby be secured. 94. Among sense organs the mind is very fickle, and wherever it runs we must follow it without any idea of duality.

95. Please read the *Pāsashtī* (or the sixty-five verses), and bring to mind the cream of it. Examine the inside of the construction and its meaning. 96. This *Pāsashtī* is the pith of the *Vedas* and the *Shāstras*. Minutely think it over. Experience it, and keep the established illustrations in proof in your mind.’ 97. Such was the letter which Dnyāneshwar wrote with his own hand. He gave it to the disciples (of Chāngdev), and requested them to convey his *namaskār* (respectful bow). 98. Said Dnyāneshwar, ‘Please tell your *guru* that the true purpose of protecting the body for fourteen centuries will only be accomplished when he realizes in personal experience the reply to his blank letter.’

CHĀNGDEV UNABLE TO DECIPHER THE REPLY

99. When Dnyāneshwar had so requested them, they bowed to him and taking the letter with them at once set off. 100. They soon reached the Taptī river and bowing to their *guru* they placed before him the letter given them by Dnyānrāj. 101. They communicated to him in detail his oral message also: ‘You mastered the eight-fold *yoga*, and protected your body for fourteen centuries. 102. The success of those years depends,’ so the letter implies, ‘on your own heart experiencing the manifestation of God. 103. With this oral message, he has given us this letter. He lives in a very saintly way, and without the slightest hypocrisy. 104. All those four children are very young. They regard honour and dishonour as the same. Nivrīti, a store of spiritual knowledge, is seven years of age, and Dnyāndev has just completed six. 105. Sopān is only five but is without consciousness of the body. Muktabāi is four years old, and the wonder is that though she has power she has no pride. 106. They are, as it were, the tender sprouts of the supreme Brahm. They have abundance of devotion and love, and the deity they wor-

ship is Pāndurang. 107. With expressions of reverence they asked us to convey to you their *namaskārs*.' Chāngdev took the letter and bowed his head to it. 108. After reading the first verse, many thoughts came into his mind. So many meanings could be deduced from it that his intellect became puzzled. 109. However much he tried he could not grasp the meaning. He did not know what to do, and he was overcome with shame. 110. Chāngdev felt dejected and he replied, 'Though with great labour I have mastered all the arts, I am not able to understand the secret meaning of this. 111. The words of Dnyāndev are in Marathi and yet I do not understand their meaning. Of all books those on the *Vedānta* are the highest, but this is even more difficult than that. 112. With a worthy display I must go to meet him. To ask him the interpretation of the letter I have determined to do this.'

CHĀNGDEV GOES ON A TIGER TO DNYANESHWAR

113. Calling together his disciples the great *yogī* said to them, 'The three gods have descended to the mortal world as *avatārs*. 114. Let us all go in a body to meet them, and thereby we shall be able to understand their manner of living [quite apart from getting an explanation of his letter']. 115. The *Marudgana* (i. e., the immortal Chāngdev) brought to mind his knowledge of bewitchment, fascination and suppression of faculties, and set off with his disciples, riding a tiger. 116. All had tigers to ride on and used snakes as whips, an amazing sight at which people were astonished. 117. Chāngdev was in a distinguished position in the midst of all his disciples and he appeared like a king in the midst of his army in all his royal grandeur. 118. There are many sciences but the *Vedānta* is the chief amongst them, and in the same manner shone Chāngdev, for he possessed a wonderful power. 119. Or it may be said that he shone like

the wish-tree amongst the eighteen *bhārs* [a *bhār* = 8,000 *tolās*] of herbs, for the form of this expert in divine accomplishments shone in the midst of his disciples. 120. Chāngdev who possessed all the divine accomplishments appeared to the people like the Husband of Rohini (the moon) fully risen among the stars after the dark fortnight. 121. People of the towns through which the *Māṇḍ-gana* (i. e., the immortal Chāngdev) passed on his way came to meet him with materials of worship. 122. All their desires and vows were at once fulfilled, and Chāngdev became known everywhere, for his fame was greatly increasing. 123. Seeing the effects of his superhuman power many people came to visit him, and knowing their hearts he stopped in each place a few hours. 124. With all this pomp the chief of the *yogīs* journeyed to the South. Alankāpur (i. e., Ālandī) was quite near, within ten miles from the banks of the Bhīmā river. 125. On the sacred banks of the Bhīmā there is a town called Pimpalgaon, and from there to Alankāvati (i. e., Ālandī) was a distance of eight miles, the people of that place being fortunate and well-to-do. 126. When he learned that the Bhīmā river is famous in the *Purāṇs*, Chāngdev stayed on its banks for a few hours and performed all his religious rites. 127. Here he called a disciple and ordered him, ' You go ahead and inform them of our coming. 128. First bow to the feet of Nivrattirāj, Dnyāndev, Sopān and Muktabāi, and then tell them of my doings. 129. Give them also my profound *namaskār* and tell them I shall soon be there to meet them. ' As soon as Chāngdev had given the order his disciple started. 130. Riding on the tiger he soon arrived at Alankāpur (i. e., Ālandī). Just at that time the *avatārs* of the three gods were sitting on a wall. 131. Nivratti was remarking to Dnyāndev, ' You courteously sent a letter to Chāngdev, and because he did not understand the

meaning of it he is coming to see you; 132. and in order to show you his superhuman power he is riding a tiger.' While they were thus talking of the secret purpose (of Chāṅgdev) the Brāhman arrived. 133. Alighting from the tiger he prostrated himself before them, but before he could say anything Sopān said, 134. 'This *Marudgana* (i. e., one of the forty-nine immortals in heaven) is fourteen centuries old, he has deceived death by dint of his study of the *yoga* and he is coming to see us.' 135. Then Nivritti said, ' Oh Dnyāneshwar, a saint is coming to our house, so let us go to receive him; this would be very proper in my opinion.' 136. Nivrittirāj having given such advice Dnyāndev performed a miracle that might seem to be impossible, for he told the wall to go forward and receive Chāṅgdev.

DNYĀNESHWAR MAKES A WALL MOVE

137. As soon as Dnyāneshwar uttered these words, there really happened a most wonderful event; listen to it with reverence, you pious folk. 138. The people were aghast at seeing the wall move as rapidly as the gallop of a horse, and yet the wall was made of nothing but stones and earth. 139. On the wall were sitting the three forms of Dnyāndev, Sopān and Nivritti, moving along just like a boat. 140. The inhabitants of this sacred place were very much astonished, and every one, small and great, ran after it. 141. Just then Chāṅgā Vateshwar and his fourteen hundred disciples, all riding tigers, were coming with the speed of the wind. 142. It was just exactly like the meeting of an eagle (of Vishnu), and the *bhakta* of Māruti; or like the accidental meeting of the sun and the Husband of Rohini (i. e., the moon) in the sky. 143. He looked, as it were, like the three-eyed god (i. e., Shiva) when surrounded by his demons, ghosts and hobgoblins and when suddenly met by the great Vishnu in His sixfold glory. 144. In all the grandeur of his divine

accomplishments Chāṅgdev, surrounded by disciples and all riding on tigers, thus arrived to meet Dnyāndev. 145. When, however, that statue of the Supreme Brahm (i. e., Dnyāndev) came with his devotion, his divine knowledge, and the lustre of his indifference to worldly things, and put life into the lifeless wall, then at such a sight Chāṅgdev was extremely amazed. 146. Said he to himself, 'His power is extraordinary; of this I am convinced; for he has put life into a lifeless thing and no one else possesses such power. 147. Of what value is it for me to go to him riding a living tiger?' Thus his pride vanished, and he got down. 148. Following the example of Chāṅgdev, all his disciples left their tiger-vehicles and their whips of snakes which immediately entered into the holes of ant-hills. 149. All this was only the illusory exhibition of superhuman power, for the tigers disappeared into the forest, just as clouds make their appearance in the sky and in an instant disappear.

CHĀNGDEV'S SUPPLICATION

150. All Chāṅgdev's pride of superhuman power now vanished and he rolled himself with his disciples at the feet of Dnyāndev. 151. Just as when the sun rises, its disc looks red, and at its extraordinary brightness the moon lacks lustre; 152. or as in the presence of the power of Māruti, the king of birds (i. e., the eagle Garud) loses its power; in the same way the pride of Chāṅgdev vanished as he saw the wall move. 153. He had studied the fourteen sciences, he had mastered the sixty-four arts, he had protected his body for fourteen centuries, and by his power he had conquered death. 154. But all his power had vanished at the sight of Dnyāndev, just as the stars disappear at dawn; 155. just as one, who is proud of knowing by heart some poems, feels ashamed in the presence of a saint who has inspiration. 156. In the presence of established principles the *Vedas* are mute; and

the ocean stops his loud roaring at the sight of the *Rishi* Agasti. 157. When nectar is available, even the best of physicians feel abashed, for medicines are of no use as compared with the wonders performed by nectar. 158. In the same way was it with the power of Dnyāndev, for he had made the wall of lifeless stone to move a mile from Ālandī, and at that sight Chāngdev was overcome with shame. 159. Dismounting from the tiger, he let go the snake he had used as a whip. With an unusually reverent attitude and with loving devotion, he rolled himself with delight at Dnyāndev's feet. 160. Nivritti, Dnyāndev, Sopān and that store of good qualities, Muktābāi, all dismounted from the wall as they saw Chāngdev. 161. As the chief of the *yogīs* came near, they all four prostrated before him. Chāngdev raised them up with his own hands and then bowed prostrate at their feet. 162. As they met they embraced one another, and it appeared as if love was showering down happiness, and as if the gods looked on at the delightful sight. 163. The gods came in their heavenly chariots and showered flowers on them, saying, 'At the mere sight of Dnyāneshwar men on earth will be saved.' 164. After saying this, Indra and other gods returned to their heavenly abode and the people shouted with loud acclamations the name of Shri Vitthal. 165. The people talked among themselves and said, 'This meeting between Chāngdev and Dnyāneshwar is like the meeting between proud Shukra (i. e., *guru* of the demons) and Brihaspati (i. e., *guru* of the gods) when the former went as a suppliant to the latter at his house; 166. or it is as when the two oceans *Kshīrsāgar* and *Ratnākar* met because *Ratnākar* (the store of jewels) recognized the glory of *Kshīrsāgar* (the ocean of milk) when the Husband of Lakshmi (i. e., Vishnu) was reclining on it; 167. or it is like Vishvāmītra's going to Vasishtha as a suppliant on experiencing

the latter's power; or it is like a meeting between Vishnu and Shiva; 168. their mutual meeting has brought something like a shower of delight and happiness.' Dnyāndev holding Chāngdev close to himself, brought him to their place of rest under the banyan tree. 169. Under the shade of the tree sat this company of saints. Then the loud acclamations of the name of Vitthal reverberated through the sky. 170. Dnyāndev, Nivrīti, Sopān and that store of virtue, Muktabāi, had a perfect knowledge of the soul; still they worshipped the *saguna* form of God (i. e., God with qualities and form). 171. Some practise *Vajrāsana* (the *yoga* posture on the bed of nails), and thereby carry the soul in the crown of their head.* These lose the consciousness of body by becoming one with the supreme element of God. 172. They constantly see only Him Who is without qualities and without form, and have attained the *sāyujya* salvation, being assimilated into the soul of the universe. 173. Such is the condition of the *yogīs*; they become one with the pervading Spirit of the universe, but they lose that pleasure of *bhakti* which is longed for even by Brahmadev and other gods. 174. Nivrīti, Dnyāndev and Sopān were not like these, for they came to the mortal world to save it. 175. Inwardly they were full of devotion and perfect in their knowledge of the Supreme Brahm; still they were given to the worship of God; therefore, Chakrapāni (i. e., Krishna) met them in His *saguna* form. 176. Such men who understand non-duality at heart, but who also have a love for the image and form of God, are rarely to be found in the movable and immovable creation. 177. Take for instance a beautiful woman, but in addition to whose beauty there is faithfulness to her husband, such a woman is very rare,

*The *yoga* idea is that every man's head is the seat of Brahm the Universal Soul, and that only *yogīs* have the power to achieve this, which means uniting one's soul to the Universal Soul.

for there are not many like her. 178. If pure gold is found with sweet odour in addition, it will be of untold value. 179. A man perfect in his studies of the *Vedas* and *Shāstras*, and in addition has peace and forgiveness in his heart and is without pride, such a one is rarely to be found. 180. One who amasses wealth by honest business and who being without desires spends it in giving to deserving persons, such a one can hardly be found. 181. Amongst men there are not many who perform good deeds according to prescribed rules such as performing great sacrifices and the ordinary offerings, yet who, free from all desires, offer their whole hearts to Krishna. 182. No doubt the ocean is profoundly deep but its water is salty, so also a *yogī* may have the knowledge of the soul, and yet have his face turned away from the pleasure of love arising from the worship of the *saguna* form of God. 183. Nivritti, Sopān and Dnyāneshwar were not of that kind but were devoted to the Supreme Brahm and were masters in the performances of *yoga*, yet were ever ready to worship the *saguna* form of God. 184. They shouted the name of Vitthal as they sat under the *Vishrānti* (rest-giving) banyan tree. That led Chāngdev to ask them how they made the lifeless wall to move. 185. 'By my superhuman power, I tamed the tigers and the snakes, but you made a lifeless wall move. This is indeed beyond the power of all understanding.'

DNYĀNESHVAR AND CHĀNGDEV CONVERSE TOGETHER

186. As Chāngdev said this, Dnyāndev placed his head on Chāngdev's feet and extemporised an *abhang* (a verse) which every one knows. 187. But I will explain it in brief for you pious ones to note: The words of saints are simple, still there is a deep meaning in them. 188. If God wills to do a thing, what is there that He will not do? He made a boat (or

bridge) of stones to float on water, and all the monkeys (i. e., in the army of Rāma) walked over it, and saw the glory of Lankā (i. e., Ceylon). 189. Ants will for ever subsist on the rays of the sun, and even crops will grow on a fiery tableland, but all this is only by the power of Shri Hari. 190. Shripati (i. e., Vishnu) pervades the movable and immovable creation ; everything in creation is His form, and it was He who by His prowess easily moved the wall. 191. The five principal elements are in fact at variance with one another, but Shridhar (i. e., God) makes them live in peace together by Himself entering into them. 192. The atmosphere thinks of destroying space. Space says, ' I will in an instant eat up the wind. ' 193. The wind says, ' I will put out the fire in less than a moment. ' Fire says, ' I will dry up all water. ' 194. Water says, ' I will destroy the whole earth. ' Such is the disagreement among the five elements. Then what does the Recliner on the Serpent (i. e., Vishnu) do ? 195. The Husband of Lakshmi (i. e., Vishnu) pervades these five elements, and effects concord in them, and makes them friendly in action. 196. He it was who in order to fulfil your longing made the wall move by His own power. The Husband of Rukmini alone knows that it was not our power at all. 197. At this explanation of Dnyāndev, Chāngdev fell at His feet. In the next chapter there are very sweet stories, and good people should listen to them. 198. The Merciful to the lowly, the Giver of salvation inspires me, and I, Mahipati, trusting in Him, reverently praise the saints. 199. *Svasti* (Peace) ! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktulīlāmrit*. By listening to it one's heart's desires are fulfilled. May the pious and loving *bhāktas* listen. This is the fourth delightful chapter. It is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER V

CHĀNGDEV, DNYĀNDEV AND MUKTĀBĀI

GOD'S PRIDE IN HIS *BHAKTAS*

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Oh Shri Hari, unfathomable is Thy *līlā* (i. e., creativeness), as is shown in various ways in the lives of Thy *bhaktas*. Thou dost place Thy assuring hand on their heads and protect them in the ocean of worldly existence. 2. Thou dost stay with them, attracted by the power of their loving devotion, and dost not care to know their caste or family, for Thou art the Merciful to the lowly. 3. Nāmā was born in a *Shūmpī's* (tailor's) family and seeing his pure devotion Thou didst embrace him and dine with him on the same plate. 4. Chokhāmela was a *Mahār* by caste, and though he was an obstinate person, Thou didst tuck up Thy yellow raiment from behind and didst drag his dead cattle, Oh Vithobā ! 5. Dāmājipant was a simple Brāhman, but when he had the royal granaries plundered (by starving people), Thou didst become Vitho (i. e., the Mahār Vitho).^{*} Such are Thy deeds, O Gopāl (i. e., Krishna). 6. When Mirābāi was given a deadly poison by her royal father, Thou, Oh Holder of the *Shāranga* Bow, didst drink it, and Thy entire body became green thereby. 7. Kānhopātrā was charming in form and when the Muhammadan king persecuted her deceitfully and she pleaded with Thee for succour, Thou didst at once run to her help. 8. Thou didst take her life from her body and didst unite it with Thyself, and her dead body turned into a *tarālī* tree which is still seen by all the pilgrims who go there. 9. Kabir was a Muhammedan yet a *bhakta* of Vishnu who gave himself to the worship of

^{*} See *Stories of Indian Saints II*, vol. 10 in this Series, p. 95.

Shrī Rāma, and with Thine own hand Thou didst weave for him his gold-bordered shawls. Such is Thy love for Thy *bhaktas*. 10. In order to spread the fame of Dnyāndev, Sopān, Nivrīti, and Muktabāi who was the Primal Power of God, Thou didst easily make the wall move. 11. In this way Thou art proud of Thy *bhaktas*. Oh Brother of the helpless, oh merciful to the lowly, grant me now Thy assurance and enable me to write loving stories.

CHĀNGDEV IS PREACHED TO

12. In the last chapter there was related the meeting between Dnyāndev and Chāngdev, and their conversation under the *Vishrānti* (rest-giving) banyan tree. 13. Nivrīti, Dnyāndev and Sopān motioned to Muktabāi to instruct Chāngdev in the knowledge of the soul. 14. They said among themselves, 'His (Chāngdev's) fourteen centuries are still left blank, like the blank page he sent. You (Muktabāi) now write on it the letters of interpretation.' 15. A conversation then went on between the two in quite a natural way. I will quote the exact verses in my book. May the good people listen to them with reverence. 16. Why is an interpreter needed concerning the exact words of the saints? Why draw a picture of him on the wall when an *avatār* is personally present. 17. When there is the sun in the sky why look at its mere reflection? When the sacred water of the Bhāgīrathī is near at hand, why store water in a brass vessel? 18. When you can hear the words of blessing direct from a saint's tongue, why trouble to commit them to memory? If one has a mansion to live in, why erect a big cottage? 19. If there is nectar at hand, why try to get drugs? Therefore I will quote exactly the *abhangs* (verses) addressed to Chāngdev.

Verses:—1. Under the grateful shade of the banyan tree was the meeting with Chāngdev when they mutually exchanged their

experiences. 2. Nivritti and Dnyāneshwar said, 'We know you to be great, all-knowing and generous. 3. You mastered the *yoga* and pierced the six organic spheres of the human body and made the divine accomplishments your slave maids.' 4. At this he (Chāṅgdev) joined his hands palm to palm, fell before them in obeisance at his full length, 5. and said, 'At the vision of the saints my mind has become pure, and pride has vanished. 6. I cheated death and preserved my body, so that I should see a chief of *yogīs* like you. 7. Vateshwar Chāṅgdev requests you to cut asunder the ties of his worldly attachment. *Here end the verses.*

20. Under the rest-giving banyan tree Nivritti, Dnyāndev, Sopān, and Muktabāi, that store of good qualities, met Chāṅgdev. 21. They then conversed about that which is tested by experience. As a result of this, the joy they then experienced was so great that they could not contain it, for it was like a continual shower of happiness. 22. Nivritti and Dnyāneshwar said to Chāṅgdev, 'You are great; you, a *Marudgana*, have come down to the earth as an *avatār* to save us. 23. You have pierced the six organic spheres of the human body and carried to completion the great *yogic* practices; and you have made the divine accomplishments subject to you as maids, thereby showing miracles to the people.' 24. After these words of mutual praise, they prostrated before one another at full length. Then joining his hands together palm to palm, Chāṅgdev requested them in words of nectar. 25. Said he, 'Blessed is this happy day on which I have had a vision of such saints! All my pride has vanished, and my mind has become completely pure.' 26. 'You deceived death,' Dnyāneshwar answered, 'and thus saved your mortal body that I might see a *yogī* like you.' 27 (Chāṅgdev replied), 'Every wish of mine has been fulfilled and I have seen with my own eyes the very forms of the saints. Chāṅgdev Vateshwar pleads that you extricate him from the meshes of this worldly life.' 28. Hearing this praise, Nivritti, Dnyāndev,

and Sopān beckoned to Muktābāi to begin her preaching to Chāngdev. 29. Let us suppose, to begin with, there is a vessel of pure gold, but it has been sprinkled with the water of indifference to mundane things, and it is then a fit receptacle for storing the nectar of divine knowledge. 30. Or let us once more suppose there is a fertile field; if clouds pour water on it and if one sows seed there with his own hands, he reaps what will benefit many. 31. If you find a friend who is not backbiting and deceitful but who loves you devotedly, then only divulge your secrets to him. 32. If a son has noble qualities and is above others of his age in wisdom, the father will tell him all his secrets.

MUKTĀBĀI'S ADVICE TO CHĀNGDEV

33. Following the suggestion, therefore, of her brothers about instructing Chāngdev, Muktābāi spoke to him on a profound subject as follows. The Primal Mother said :

Verses. 1. Try to understand 'This is I; This is I.' When you experience this, then all your sense of duality will vanish. 2. Then the mind will not give the idea of *Soham* (i. e., "I am He," the all-pervading supreme Brahman). For where there is the absence of "I", there cannot be the presence of "Thou". 3. *Aham* means "I", and *Soham* is the secret of it. Muktābāi says, "Oh Chāngā, understand this." *Here end the verses.*

34. In these verses Muktābāi tells Chāngdev to understand himself in his heart, to leave off the illusion (of 'me' and 'mine') and to make himself one with the Supreme Brahman. 35 'Knowledge and indifference to worldly things are related to the three *gunas* (qualities)* but unalloyed joy is apart from these, and that you should seek after.' 36. Said Muktābāi to Chāngdev, 'Open your eyes to your need, and then I will explain to you, my friend, all the workings of the knowledge of the soul. 37. Whatever you behold in the whole creation, consider

* See Appendix on the word *guna*.

it as your own self; and when you experience this secret then you will no more have any sense of duality. 38. Let your mind be full of the idea of *soham*. Wipe out all sense of egotism from your mind, and then the idea of duality will naturally vanish. There will be the presence of neither "I" nor "Thou." 39. The ego is a self-conscious mind, but *Soham* (i. e., "I am He") is the secret to be understood (i. e., that of being conscious of being Brahm).’ Muktabāi added to Chāngdev, ‘Understand this secret in your heart.’

CHĀNGDEV’S CONFESSION

40. On hearing these words of nectar, Chāngdev made several prostrations before her. Said he, ‘For these fourteen hundred years this store of knowledge was a treasure buried away from me underground. 41. In order to make a hypocritical display of religion, I came to meet you riding a tiger, with a snake in my hand for a whip. 42. My mind was like those evil men who enjoy prodigious wealth. As I had mastered the divine accomplishments I considered myself great. 43. But at the sight of you I have expelled that idea from my mind. You four are like Mahesh (i. e., Shiva); therefore now give peace of heart.’ 44. In this way Chāngdev pleaded earnestly, and free from all pride.

DNYANDEV’S ADMONITION TO CHANGDEV

Then Dnyāndev addressed him in his own gracious way thus: 45. ‘If you attain purity of heart, then unbroken and peaceful meditation is possible. Fraudulent display of religion is only a hindrance, so drop this foolish idea. 46. Our meeting together is like the meeting of camphor and fire; in a moment’s time neither is to be seen. 47. Because you were proud of your accomplishments, you hindered everything else. Why have you been misled by your desire for popularity?’ 48.

Dnyāndev further added to Vateshwar (i. e., Chāngdev), ' Now accept your proper place and thereby your heart will become happy. And you will escape rebirths. 49. The accomplishment of *yoga* is very difficult and when it is attained all the accomplishments create hindrances, and you cannot obtain joy of soul, for all that is not eternal is perishable. 50. So I will tell you a very easy way. Hear the secret of my heart. If you curb the sense organs and the mind then even to-day you will gain divine knowledge. 51. See yourself in whatever your mind runs after.' Dnyāndev still further added to Chāngdev, ' The place where the soul should rest is in the Brahm without qualities. 52. Give up the entire *rajoḡuna** (the cause of the great activity seen in creatures), root out the *tanmoḡuna* (ignorance), and establish *salvaguna* (i. e., the quality of pure goodness), and see your own self steadied there. 53. In your earthly existence you have been the deceiver of death, and thereby have saved your body (from destruction) until to-day; but you were not aware of the knowledge of the soul, for in your heart there was egotism present. 54. This seems to be the method of the *Karma Mārg* (way of works) but the secret of the *yogīs* is quite different. We will call you a saint only when the evil quality in you is destroyed. 55. Many bandy words about and play mischief but the attainment of Brahm is quite different, for it cannot be known by words. 56. Although one may master the six philosophical systems and the eighteen *Purāṇs*, the four *Vedas* and grammar by heart, but it (i. e., Brahm) is quite different from these. 57. Although we regard things as different, still we must understand ourselves as being in what we see and when the soul is enlightened, egoism is entirely wiped out.' 58. In this way, in the shade of the banyan tree Dnyāndev

* See Appendix under *Guna*.

preached to Chāṅgdev who gained peace of mind and reverently prostrated himself at Dnyāndev's feet.

MUKTĀBĀI TEACHES THE EQUALITY OF
MAN AND WOMAN

59. While this conversation was going on, the sun reached high noon. Then Dnyāndev said to Nivritti, 'Let us take him to our abode.' 60. Hearing what he said the whole company came into the sacred city of Ālandī to their place of abode. 61. They spread mats of straw and seated Chāṅgdev upon one, and Dnyāndev then said to Muktabāi, 'Prepare a meal for us.' 62. To this request of Dnyānrāj the Primal Mother (Muktābāi) replied, 'I will do so.' She then went to the rear of the house in the performance of her duties. 63. Just then Chāṅgdev came there, but seeing Muktabāi there he turned to go away. 64. As he turned to go away, Muktabāi savagely said to him, 'You *Guru*-less wretch, why are you going back?' What is the cause of such hesitation?^{*} 65. You are not yet free from passions, and not yet being an expert in the knowledge of the soul, you think of man and woman as essentially different, and therefore you have turned away. 66. There is a soul in you and there is also a soul in me, and thinking of it in that way a wrong idea came into your mind. 67. Now put aside the thought of the body as an outer shell of the soul, and regard both our souls as of one substance; just as there are many forms of ornaments, but the gold all are made of is one. 68. *Kāpabālyū* and *Buḡḍyū* are two names, one of a man and the other of a woman, but looking at the subject minutely, while the two are made of gold, they are entirely one in substance. 69. Or take the case of an earthen jar for water and a

^{*}In portions of verses 62-64 we have given a paraphrase rather than a translation.

great jar for holding grain and the like, but the clay from which they are made is of the same kind; so you must regard this world from the point of view of the soul being one. 70. Or take the case of a woman's *sārī* and a man's shawl, both being woven from the same thread; so men and women have different names, but are just the same as is the thread in the *sārī* and the shawl. 71. The female body and the male body have a different appearance, but the soul in the animate and the inanimate is one; and if you thus recognize people from the point of view of their souls, you will not take a wrong view regarding them. 72. If you think of yourself as pervading the three worlds you can have no desire for anything anywhere; thus you will be content in yourself. 73. A bitch, a female cat and a cow, do these wear a garment? I am just like those animals; why do you not realise this?' 74. As Chāngdev heard these words of Muktabāi his mind was convicted of his error and he exclaimed, 'The knowledge you have given me is quite irresistible.' Having said this he embraced her feet. 75. Coming back into the house he sat silently upon the grass mat and just then another interesting thing happened; listen, good people, to what it was.

CHĀNGDEV HUMBLING BY CORN ON A DISCIPLE'S HEAD

76. One of the disciples came suddenly to Chāngdev and said, 'Swāmī, I am very hungry, what shall I do?' 77. Chāngdev then had some *jondhalā* (i. e., grain) brought and he put a bundle of it in a piece of cloth, and with his own hand placed it on the disciple's head. 78. Then a seemingly impossible thing took place; the grains of corn began to pop, just as the grain merchant makes pop-corn over a fire. 79. Dnyāndev then said to Nivrītti and Sopān, 'He still longs after the pride of his superhuman accomplishments. There is no real repentance in his mind.'

80. Nivrittidev then remarked, 'Now that he has come happily into association with the saints, as soon as he becomes a disciple his soul will find peace. 81. He thinks to himself that we have no power of kindling the five mystic fires of the body; that is why he showed his special power. 82. Show him some special miracle and take away his pride.'

MUKTĀBĀI BAKES CAKES ON SOPĀN'S BACK

Hearing this, Dnyāndev said to Muktabāi, 83. 'Chāṅg-Vateshwar has come to-day to our house, so we must treat him as our guest; it is a good thing we can accomplish in this way.' 84. Hearing this Muktabāi said casually, 'Go and bring me an earthen vessel.' Dnyānrāj then added, 'Sopān will serve for it.' 85. Then bringing together the necessary materials she rolled some thin wheateakes. No smoke came from the fireplace (which showed the fire was out) and in another room there was a hungry guest. 86. Dnyāndev then said to Chāṅgdev, 'Perform your bath.' Chāṅgdev looking round saw that there was no fire in the *chul* (fireplace) and he was surprised at Dnyāndev's invitation. 87. Chāṅgdev and all who were with him having bathed they came and sat down by their leaf-plates. Sopān then kindled the five fires and the flames poured out of his mouth. 88. His back turned to a brilliant red just like heated gold. On it Muktabāi placed her flat cakes and Chāṅgdev looked on. 89. He exclaimed, 'This is something very extraordinary; they must be statues of the supreme Brahm. All the powers of *Yoga* seem to have their source in them. 90. There is the plate of self-knowledge and on it are spread the delicious nine juices. There is the sugar of compassion for all creatures, and by this the taste of food becomes most delicious. 91. Muktabāi with her own hands served the melted butter of the favour of

the *Sadguru* and when all the plates were served, all present gave loud shouts of God's name. 92. 'Shrī Hari is in every creature the enjoyer of this food.' After these words had been used in offering the food to God, water was poured (used as in the rite before a meal); they then took a sip of water and began to eat with their hands. 93. Whatever pleased anyone, Muktabāi brought and served it on their plates and after all were satisfied they used water for the cleansing of their hands. 94. Sopān then gave to every one a *tulsī* leaf to purify their mouths. Such was the feast and then all sat down with a quiet mind. 95. Dnyāndev then remarked, 'Blessed is this happy day. We have had the company of saints and the vision has been a great favour.' 96. Muktabāi then went outside taking with her an offering, and with reverence and love she embraced Nivritti's feet. 97. In this way there was a worshipping of the saints and the feasting of all took place. Chāngdev then came to Muktabāi and made his obeisance to her. 98. With hands joined palm to palm he stood there near all the four, and said, 'I did not understand the meaning of the letter which you sent. Please explain it all to me. 99. Among all the different means for attaining spiritual riches, association with the saints seems to be the best. So the *Munis* (the sages) have declared. This I have realized to-day.' 100. To this question of the great *Yogī*, what did Dnyāndev reply ?

DNYĀNDEV ASKS FOR THE SACRIFICE OF ONE OF
CHĀNGDEV'S DISCIPLES

Dnyāneshwar said, 'To understand the meaning of the letter, you must give one of your disciples as a victim. 101. Only by doing this will the meaning of my letter be impressed on your mind.' Hearing Dnyāndev's words, the Servant of Indra (i. e., Chāngdev) replied, ' I will do

so. 102. I have fourteen hundred disciples and I will give one of them as a sacrifice. I will think about it tonight and announce my decision tomorrow morning.' 103. Having heard the *sadguru's* reply the disciples became very anxious and they exclaimed, 'We wonder whose life he is going to sacrifice.' 104. Thus they murmured among themselves regarding their own lives and none had peace of mind because of their love of their own bodies. 105. Thinking in this way among themselves they were in constant commotion, each moment seemed like a year, and they considered the matter from all points of view. 106. They said to one another, 'Up to today we have sat with him in dining and have enjoyed everything with him : but we have now to suffer. 107. The *Suāmī* had placed his hand of assurance upon our head and thereby prosperity came to our house, but now we have to pay for it; it does not look well for us.' 108. One observed, 'What has happened to us is what was laid up in our past births; and the *Suāmī* has put on an appearance of sainthood by deceiving every one. 109. By practicing many powerful *mantras*, our fortunes have been wrecked; and now the matter has come to the point at which our very lives are involved; the outlook is not good.' 110. Thus the fourteen hundred disciples discussed the matter in various ways until the sun had set, when Chāṅgdev performed his evening devotion. 111. Dnyāndev, Sopān, Nivrīti and Chāṅgdev sitting together carried on their regular daily *Hari-kīrtans* and listened to the praise of Shri Hari's goodness. 112. 'In this *Kali Yuga* there seems to be no means (of salvation) superior to that of repeating His name ;' so it is said in the *Bhāgwal* by Shuka,* Saviour of the world and world-*Guru*. 113. In repeating His name at the begin-

* On Shuka see Vol. X (*Stories of Indian Saints II*) in this series, p. 416.

ning of any enterprise by saying, 'O Keshav, O Nārāyan,' and by repeating the name of Vishnu at the end of the enterprise, all that is lacking will be supplied. 114. Ajāmīl† fell in love with a *Shūdra* woman, and thereby he fell also into many sins; but in the act of calling to his son he uttered the name, 'Nārāyan' and the Lord of Vaikunth received him into heaven. 115. Having been seated in the chariot of light, *sāyujyātā* (the fourth and final stage of deliverance) was given to him. In the act of calling her parrot *Rūghava* (i. e., Rāma,) a protectress was completely saved. 116. The way of the *Yoga* practices is very difficult and is hardly acquired by one person out of a hundred thousand. But the Name (of God) purifies the illiterate and the simple-minded. 117. When continually repeating the names of Hari and Hara (Vishnu and Shiva) all the four forms of final deliverance fall at one's feet, there is then no place even for powerful sins, for all three worlds are thereby saved. 118. In order to save those who were dull and ignorant, Pundlik performed a great favour. He made the supreme Brahm stand in visible form upon a brick, and by seeing and worshipping him all are saved. 119. Shri Dnyāndev also installed an image of God by performing *kīrtans*; then lighting the light he waved it over the Husband of Rukmini. 120. They divided sweetmeats amongst them all and finally made an obeisance to God; then when all had spread out their straw mats they paid their respects to sleep. 121. Chāngdev went to a place alone at midnight and prepared for sleep, and his company of disciples came to him and served him. 122. The great *Yogī* then conversed with them and consulted them saying, 'Dnyāndev sent us a letter but its meaning is very deep. 123. One man is needed as a sacrifice in order that I may understand it in detail; so all of you think about it

† On *Ajāmīl* see Vol. X of this series, p. 389.

among yourselves and fulfil my desire.' 124. Thus consulted by their *sadguru* himself, the disciples replied, 'We offer our bodies to you so that you may carry out any plan that suggests itself to you.' 125. Those who love their bodies show only outwardly any indifference to earthly things; they have no prospect either for this life or for the life to come. 126. The bitter *vrindāvan* looks like the golden mellon but when it is cut open there is poison within; such was the case of these false disciples. 127. A counterfeit coin overlaid with gilt looks fine on the outside, but when heated it is nothing but copper. 128. To entice people one will assume the garb of a Vaishnav; but it is only in outward appearance that he shows a reverent spirit. Damn the whole race of such hypocrites! 129. Such is the *bhakti* of the avaricious; in the secret of their hearts they desire wealth but when their desire is fulfilled they neglect their *sadguru*.

CHĀNGDEV'S DISCIPLES DESERT HIM

130. Such indeed were the disciples of Chāngdev. On the outside they showed a false reverence for him, so when their *Swāmī* fell into a deep sleep they took counsel of one another thus:—131. 'Because we have remained with him he asks for one of us as a human sacrifice, so when the day dawns tomorrow death comes with it. 132. The *Swāmī* has many disciples, but each man's life is the only one he has. Now let us all go away at once. 133. The *Swāmī* can make other disciples, but to our wives we are their only ones; whereas if a centipede loses one of its legs, it still has others. 134. The teaching of *gurus* is false, and we love this earthly life.' Thus discussing the matter among themselves, all of them ran away. 135. Chāngdev had a company of fourteen hundred disciples, but not one of them remained with him; this was the device of Dnyāndev by which he tore away the snare which entangled Chāngdev. 136. To lead a her-

mit's life is much more difficult than that of living as a householder, for no one must ever desert it. 137. Only when Shri Hari shows his mercy does pride disappear; I am convinced that until then the inner self will not be right. 138. So through this device of Dnyāndev's the disciples ran away, and when Chāngdev awoke he called to his disciples, 139. but none appeared and no one answered his call : just as when a king falls in battle, those who love their bodies run away. 140. Out of all the fourteen hundred disciples who had been with Chāngdev not one of them remained by him, so with his own hand Chāngdev had to bring water to drink. 141. At early dawn Chāngdev lovingly sang the morning prayers and songs and waved the lights. Just then Dnyāndev came and they made *namaskārs* to one another. 142. Dnyāndev said to Chāngdev, 'This is a very auspicious and happy day; which disciple are you going to give as a human sacrifice in order that you may hear the meaning of my letter to you?' 143. Chāngdev then called again to his disciples but none replied, and knowing they had run away he felt very repentant. 144. He said, ' Seeking for mystic powers I have up to to-day made useless efforts, for all have left me and fled, and I feel very badly over it. 145. After making so many disciples none stands by me in an emergency, so I must consider my position as a *yogī* as perishable. 146. I have worked hard in acquiring the fourteen sciences and the sixty-four arts; I have shown to men my mystic powers and have acquired the eight forms of *yoga*. 147. Although I have made this effort I have not found peace of soul; so now I wish to dwell continually in the town of the saint and continually serve him.' 148. Then with repentance in heart he said to Dnyāndev, ' Now accept my own body as a human sacrifice and whisper into my ear the meaning of the letter. 149. My disciples have

doubtless run away for fear of losing their lives; I alone am here and therefore do as you think best. 150. I have come to you as a suppliant with all—my body, mind, and the wealth of mystic powers, and if these my words may not be true, then you know what is really in my heart.’ 151. Hearing what Chāṅgdev said, Dnyāndev was pleased and he remarked to Nivritti, ‘Chāṅgdev’s entanglements in worldly things have been removed; 152. hypocritical disciples surrounded him and now they have all run away.’ The *śaḍguru* replied, ‘All this is owing to you, for you asked the life of a man. 153. For it was in fear of death that his disciples fled away at night.’ As he thus spoke, Mukṭābāi laughed out loudly.

MUKṬĀBĀI EXPLAINS THE ‘CHĀṆGDEV PĀSASHTĪ’

154. Then Nivritti, Dnyāndev and Sopān motioned to Mukṭābāi to be kind enough to preach to Chāṅgdev. 155. To begin with, seeing that Chāṅgdev was a worthy recipient whom they had impressed with indifference to earthly things, and as he had finished his bathing and other regular ceremonies, they seated him beside her. 156. Mukṭābāi then composed an *abhang* (a verse) in order to preach to him. I will quote it here. Listen to it all you pious people :—

Verses: 1. One should recognize who “ he ” is and seeing himself as he really is he should examine himself. Day and night he should think of his oneness with the universal essence of God. 2. Knowledge is superior to the three *gunas* (qualities); consider this perfectly clear, my dear soul.’ 3. Mukṭābāi said to him, ‘Awake to facts; keep before you the enlightenment which I have given you.’ Here end the verses.

157. In this way at that time Mukṭābāi gave him the instructions he needed to make him a disciple, and being fully impressed by her instructions he then fell at her feet. 158. The entire animate and inanimate creation which appeared to his sight now appeared to be Vishwam-

bhara (i. e., the Universal Pervader); he himself seemed to vanish; no longer had he any idea of duality. 159. Pride regarding his fourteen sciences and his sixty-four arts melted away, so also of his mystic powers; and as soon as he heard Mukṭābāi's instructions he lost all consciousness of body. 160. All inanimate and animate things alike seemed to be Pāṇdurang; he appeared to him in the wakeful state and in dreams; and the deep effect of ignorance died away. 161. Through the *sadguru's* favour, every person seemed to be in the form of Brahm; everywhere the same life pervaded all things; he no longer had the feeling of separation from it. 162. 'There is no way of knowing the soul without the aid of a *sadguru*'; such is the saying of the *Vedas* and the testimony of the philosophic systems. 163. Associating with Dnyāndev, Chāṅgdev listened at night to his enthusiastic *kīrtans*, and one month passed by in hearing and thinking of all he heard day and night. 164. In the company of the saints he heard and thought, and by experience he learned meditation and thus had divine manifestations and forgot his own individuality. 165. Dnyānrāj then said to Chāṅgdev, 'You have been with us here for one month; tell me if you now understand the contents of the letter I sent to you. 166. Dnyāndev having asked this question, Chāṅgdev prostrated himself at his feet, and he answered in the form of *abhangs* (verses); listen with reverence :—

Verses : 1. 'It is raining and the rain does not stop; and therefore there is flood upon flood. O ladies, the people are drowning there. 2. People say "Drowned! Drowned!" but nobody takes any notice of the drownings. 3. People are drowned in this world as well as in the next and they are drowned even in the dry deep pool. 4. Dnyāndev is a raft (to enable one to float on water) and Mukṭābāi is the ferry boat; and by these means Chāṅgdev was safely taken to the other bank.' Here end the verses.

167. After saying this he made his *namaskār* to all the four. 'Through your favour', he said, 'my mind has become enlightened.' 168. Hearing this reply to his letter Dnyāndev was well pleased and he said, 'By being born into this world you have saved yourself.' 169. Muktabāi then said to him, 'Your body is now fourteen hundred years old; you must now be immortal; I will tell you my thought; listen to it. 170. Leave your present body and at once take a new birth. Then giving yourself in devotion to Vishnu, worship him with love and reverence. 171. Apart from the *bhakti* of Pāndurang there is no way whatever of acquiring goodness; you must worship his image with feelings of love. 172. With supreme reverence you should sing of the great deeds of Rāma and Krishna; thereby the world will be saved, and there will be no end to your good deeds. 173. Know that in this *Koli Yuga* there is no means of salvation superior to that of *kīrtans*; so go now to Pandharī and make the acquaintance of the Husband of Rukminī.' 174. The Mother *sadguru* having said this, Chāngdev grasped her feet and said, 'Your command is my authority. I will not transgress it.' 175. Having thus spoken he made his *namaskār* to all the four and prostrated himself on the ground.

CHĀNGDEV WORSHIPS DNYĀNDEV AS HIS GURU

176. A desire arose in his mind to worship his *sadguru*, so he asked himself, 'How can I repay the gratitude of one who has taken me to the other side of this sea of worldly existence?' 177. Then with the *mantras* prescribed by the *Vedas* he worshipped them with the sixteen materials for worship, offering to them sandalwood paste, flowers and garlands of *tulsi*. 178. He waved over his *sadguru* the incense, the lights and the five-lamp platter, lovingly making the offerings and giving the gifts, and then distributing the sweetmeats. 179. Shouting out the name of Shri Vitthal he prostrated him-

self on the ground exclaiming, 'Blessed is Nivritti, and the great *Yogī* in whom Shiva has descended to this earth. 180. Blessed is Dnyāndev, the *śaḍguru*! He has become an *avatār* of Vishnu on earth; by the mere sight of him innumerable lives have been saved. 181. Blessed is Sopāneshwar the incarnation of Prajāpati, and Muktabāi is the Primal Power; their names alone save the world.' Thus did Chāngdev praise them. 182. With handfuls of flowers and the muttering of *mantras* Chāngdev reverently made his *namaskār* to them, and he then asked leave to return to Vateshwar. 183. Chāngdev's throat was at that time choked with emotion and tears of joy flowed from his eyes as he said, 'Blessed is this occasion which I have seen.' 184. Then Nivritti, Dnyāndev, Sopān and Muktabāi, the treasure house of goodness, saw Chāngdev on his way with feelings of love. 185. Chāngdev after worshipping their feet started to return, but again and again he turned round, for the love in his heart could not be contained. 186. After seeing Chāngdev on his way the four returned to their home; the Life of the World was in their contemplation and in their minds and they had no other purpose for living.

DAILY LIFE OF THE FOUR

187. In their moments of wakefulness, in sleep and dreams their minds were filled with the form of Pāndurang; every night they performed enthusiastic *kīrtans* and the citizens of the place came to listen. 188. During the daytime Dnyāndev was accustomed to read to those around him from the *Vedānta* and his *Dnyāneshvarī*. Blessed is the sacred city of Alankāpurī (i. e., Ālandī)! It is like Pandhari or heaven. 189. Blessed, twice blessed, is that country of *Fanchakroshī* (i. e., the region of ten miles around), because Dnyāndev was associated with it. Blessed are the inhabitants of that

Vaishnav holy city, for God was near them. 190. Blessed are the banks of the Indrāyani, the maternal home of every sacred bathing place, for at noontime all the gods come there to perform their ablutions. 191. The sacred bathing places of the three worlds, they always dwell in towns where saints live; there being purified they save every one. 192. The town in which these prominent Vaishnavs descended as *avatārs* is Vaikunth (heaven) itself where there are continually enthusiastic *kīrtans*, and the servants of Yama (death) flee away. 193. In the town where the saints dwell, *Kāla* (death) and *Kali* (the evil age) cannot enter; all its people become four armed; this is profoundly strange.

194. This book of the *Bhaktalīlāmṛit* may be said to be Pandhari, the purifying sacred city; here Pundlik the distinguished Vaishnav of sincere character continually resided. 195. The four forms of final deliverance are excelled by the Chandrabhāgā-Bhāgirathi river; at the mere sight of it alone innumerable lives have been saved. 196. The *Veṇūnād* (or tunes of a bamboo flute) may be considered as the supreme happiness of full joy, and here Govind stands playing many a tune on his pipe. 197. Here with his hands upon his hips the Lord of the world stands upon a brick; here He meets His pious *bhaktas* and holds them to his heart. 198. This is that dark-complexioned Life of the world, who fastens His face in contemplation towards the tip of His nose; Mahīpati worshipping His feet, lovingly remembers them. 199. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmṛit*. Merely by listening to it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. May the pious *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the fifth very delightful chapter. With the extra verses inserted, the number becomes 202 [so adds Mahīpati]. It is an offering to Shri Krishna.

Chapter VI

LIFE OF CHĀNGDEV

(*Continued*)

HUMAN, RELIGIOUS AND MORAL DUTIES

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. If, after having acquired a human body, one does not listen to the praises of Shri Hari, but is absorbed in earthly things, he is like an animal. 2. The functions of eating, sleeping, and the sexual passion are found in every creature, but if a man gives himself to these unrestrainedly, there can be no true *bhakti*. 3. It is by good fortune that we have acquired a human body, and it is our duty to make it what it ought to be; with a repentant mind we should go to sacred bathing places and on pilgrimages. 4. We should worship the image of Vishnu to achieve our desires, and we should lovingly prostrate our body before it; we should take the opportunity of seeing saints with our own eyes, and should listen with our own ears to the praises of God's goodness. 5. We should carry on gladly our daily affairs, but also perform acts of benevolence, giving water to the thirsty and food to the hungry. 6. One should never tell a falsehood, even to save his life; his lips should always be repeating the name, 'Shri Rāma, Krishna, Govind.' 7. Besides these means (of salvation) I have no liking for any other. Mahipati falls at Thy feet, O Pāndurang. Give me what Thou wilt.

CHĀNGDEV CONSULTS GORAKSHANĀTH

8. In the last chapter we learned of the delightful story of the instruction given to Chāngdev and how he took leave of Dnyāndev and came to Vate-shwar. 9. He was impressed by Muktābāi's command that he should as soon as possible acquire another.

body, worship Shri Pāndurang, and keep Him in his memory. 10. After Chāṅgdev had arrived at Vateshwar he worshipped *Karpūragaura* (i. e., the camphor-white Shiva), made Him a *namaskār*, worshipping Him with all the materials of worship and then departed. 11. Leaving the banks of the Tapti river he went to Toranamālā, where Shri Gorakshanāth, the direct *avatār* of Vishnu, abides. 12. He became an *avatār* in this *Kali Yuga* in order to save the world; although all-powerful he wandered about entirely free from all attachment to earthly things. 13. With a longing in the heart to serve him Chāṅgdev made him a *namaskār*, worshipping him with all the materials of worship and with love in his heart. 14. Chāṅgdev worshipped Goraksha because he was in the same *guru*-soul; Goraksha also received Chāṅgdev with reverence, saying, 'A man of perfect accomplishments has come to my house.' 15. With joy in his heart he praised Chāṅgdev and said, 'Seeing your loving *bhakti* the Lord of Kailās has manifested Himself. 16. I have heard of your reputation in turning a brass cup into the symbol of Vateshwar (i. e., Shiva), and through you there have also been shown other manifestations of superhuman power in this world of mortals.' 17. To this praise of Chāṅgdev, Goraksha added the following: 'Whatever desire you have in your heart tell me of it. 18. As a basis for what deed have you come here? Tell me all in detail without any hesitation.' 19. As Gorakshanāth questioned him thus Chāṅgdev placed his head at his feet and said, 'I have one request to make, O mighty one; I will tell you what it is; please listen. 20. When I was previously at Vateshwar my superhuman powers were at their height, and many came on pilgrimage to see me with worldly desires in their hearts. 21. Among these came a husband and wife with a strong desire to have a son, and they began to perform rigorous austerities, even refusing

to eat. 22. Seeing their earnestness Vateshwar (i. e., Shiva) was pleased, and Shri Shankar (i. e., Shiva) said to me, "Fulfil their desires for them." 23. Having seen this vision in my dreams I then said to this couple, "Tell me at once what is your desire. 24. I am perplexed, for I have received to-day a command from the bull-bannered god (i. e., Shiva). So if you have any trouble tell me of it. 25. Where do you live ? What is your business ? Which do you desire, a son, or wealth ? Tell me." 26. To my question he replied, " My reverent worship is ever at your feet, O *Swāmi*. 27. A child obstinately demands something difficult to give, but its mother supplies it with what it wants; and you, like her, are a compassionate saint and always merciful to the lowly. 28. The great desire of both of us is that we would have a son like you; then all our family line will surely be saved." 29. Pleading thus very earnestly, both made me a *namaskār*; I was pleased with them and gave them a boon. 30. I said, " Gorakshanāth, the great *yogi* and a direct *avatār* of Vishnu, wanders about on this earth in order to save the world. 31. Some day he will come to your house to beg and when he plays his musical instrument, with its sound I will manifest myself (as a child). 32. Let your mind be on its guard that you do not send away any unexpected guest." After I had said this to him the Brāhman again made a request. 33. Said he, " You have given me a promise, but what will be the date of its fulfilment." I replied giving him a promise that in twelve years I would come to them as an infant. 34. Receiving this answer as a boon the Brāhman went back to his home, and from that time he began to contemplate me most intensely. 35. Since I told him of the time that would elapse, eleven years have passed and now six months remain. I have therefore come to tell the *Swāmi*. 36. The month of Shrāvan (i. e., August) and

Nāgpanchamī (the feast dedicated to cobra-worship) are auspicious and the *Suāmī* should please go there and I will manifest myself at the time of the music. 37. At this request of Chāngdev, Gorakshanāth replied, 'I will certainly be there and we will fulfil the desires of their hearts.'

CHANGDEV AS A CHILD OF MUDHOPANT
AND RUKMINĪ

38. So spoke the great *Yogī*, and Chāngdev taking leave of him returned to the banks of the river *Tāpī* and there worshipped *Shrī Vateshwar* (i.e., *Shiva*). 39. During the six months there Chāngdev made his body invisible, but through the seemingly impossible condition of the great *Yogī*, wonderful deeds were shown to the people. 40. Near the city* was a sacred place called *Nārāyaṇdohā* and the man there who held the post of town-scribe (or revenue officer) was named *Mudhopant*. 41. He was of the *Vajurveda* branch of *Brāhmans*, of excellent character, one who constantly offered the five great sacrifices and gave food to all creatures. 42. His wife was a very dutiful woman named *Rukmini* and they were constantly thinking of Chāngdev. 43. While carrying on their occupation Chāngdev was in their minds; day and night, in wakefulness, in dreams, and in dreamless sleep, they could not forget him. 44. They said, 'He gave us the promise that he would become our son, and that promise will never be falsified; we trust him, 45. and the limit of time which he set to us is very near.' So they waited for the *Kānapadyā* [or, man with the split ear, the name given to any follower of *Gorakshanāth*]. They said to themselves, 'When will he come to beg at our house?' 46. After some considerable time the *'Nāgpanchamī* festival was approaching, so they were always on the watch to see

* Or. Near to Nagar (i.e., Ahmednagar). See also VI. 99, 186 and VII. 39.

what would happen. 47. After four days Goraksha appeared and began to beg of them. Standing at their door he called out ' *Alakh*, '* a sound that he made without effort. 48. His brilliant complexion was like that of gold and he had rubbed the holy ashes over his body; the divine earrings flashed from his ears and His large eyes were beautiful. 49. Seeing such a dazzling form the mistress of the house was amazed, and going into the house she at once brought out food and gave it to him. 50. She now remembered what had happened before and the promise that Chāngdev had given them, so with a sincere heart she made a *namaskār* to Goraksha. 51. The great *yogī* was pleased and said to her, 'I will fulfil at once your desire.' Then taking his musical instrument in his hand he began to play on it. 52. The heavenly sound with its sweet music was very lovingly listened to by Rakhumābāi, and just then a very wonderful thing happened; listen to it with reverence. 53. Along with the sound a babe appeared in their front yard, having all the thirty-two auspicious characteristics; it was beautiful in form and to see it was a marvel. 54. For a moment Rakhumābāi lost consciousness and in the meantime Gorakshanāth became invisible; Mudhopant now coming in from outside learned of what had happened. 55. Rakhumābāi told him that an uninvited guest had come into their front yard, and that as soon as she heard the sound of his musical instrument she saw an infant before her eyes. 56. He then remembered what had formerly been told them and exclaimed, 'Vateshwar (i. e., Shiva) has become pleased with us, and the promise that Chāngdev gave us to become our son has now been fulfilled. 57. To-day he has confirmed his words.' She then lifted up the infant and placed it on her lap with a

* *Alakh* is a name of Brahm shouted loudly by *Gosāvis* while begging.

feeling of great satisfaction. 58. There was an outburst of joy and happiness in their home; auspicious musical instruments were played and sweetmeats were distributed from house to house to the wonder of the people. 59. After bathing the infant she placed it to her breasts which immediately filled with milk; wonderful is God's method. 60. The child was beautiful and had the fortunate characteristics; to look at it gave delight to the eye; and everyone said, 'One of the *Marudgana* (or one of the immortals)* has again become an *avatār*.' 61. An astrologer was then called in to make out his horoscope, and gifts were distributed to beggars in the fulness of the joy. 62. The inhabitants of the town made a joyful festival of the occasion, exclaiming, 'The great *yogī* has truly descended into our town'. 63. On the twelfth day the ceremony was observed of putting the child in a cradle and they gave it the name of Chāngdev; they also distributed gram roasted on oil and mixed with salt and chillies to everyone. 64. It was called Chāngdev because it was in performing their austerities at Chāngā-Vateshwar that they had received this treasure of a son from Chāngdev Vateshwar, and it was very lovingly cared for. 65. Days, months and years passed by and the child grew; he quickly learned to talk and walk, his appearance was beautiful and he was a treasure-house of goodness. 66. In his fifth year he was invested with the sacred thread and instructed in the *Gāyatrī Mantra*.† All this was done by Mudhopant with great pleasure, and the festive occasion lasted four days. 67. The Vedic Brāhmans were satisfied by great feasting and gifts. The child's mental capacity was very great and he began to learn the *Vedas* by heart. 68. The family *guru* had no

* See Appendix on *Marudgana*.

† See Appendix on *Gāyatrī Mantra*.

difficulty in instructing him. He who performs the deeds of an *avatār* and who was a *Yoga-bhrashta* (one whose religious acts have been interrupted in a former birth)* easily committed the four *Vedas* to memory and he used to repeat the *Shūstras* as much as he wanted. 69. He became an expert in poetry and grammar, and seeing him people were astonished; even the most distinguished learned Brāhmans came to see him. 70. They remarked, 'In order to take away our confusion of mind Prajāpati (i. e., Brahmadev) has become a visible *avatār*, he has committed the whole of the *Vedas* to memory and has become a thorough expert with the *Bhāgavat* (*Purāṇ*).' 71. Some people remarked, 'This is Dvaipāyan (*Vyāsa*) who has again become an *avatār*'; and most distinguished Pundits began to come and praise Chāngdev. 72. Recognizing him as indeed an *avatār*, golden coins were placed before him; garments and ornaments were offered him, and his mother and father were full of joy. 73. Mudhopant had made Vateshwar (i. e., Shiva) his debtor by means of his service, and now the debtor is repaying as a son; moreover, he became a man of much property. 74. In his very first attempt to study them, the boy mastered all the fourteen sciences and sixty-four arts; let him only once glance over what was to be learned, and he could repeat it word for word. 75. Seeing his excellent qualities a limitless amount of money was given to Chāngdev and he was greatly honoured. One now said, 'I will offer to him my daughter in marriage.'

CHĀNGDEV'S MARRIAGE

76. The gentleman gave a thousand gold coins as dowry (or as a gift to the bridegroom), and when the marriage day was fixed their hearts were full of joy. 77. Divinities were installed and Brāhmans were feasted; there

* See Appendix under the word *Yoga-bhrashta*.

was performed a worship of Ganpati (for the purpose of preventing hindrances). The marriage curtain was then drawn and the Brāhman priests began to repeat the appropriate eight verses. 78. While *OM punyāham* (the sacred syllable) was being uttered, there came the sound of musical instruments, and with the prescribed ceremonials the four days' festival was celebrated. 79. Taking the bride and bridegroom with him Mudhopant then returned to his home, and it gave him great pleasure to see how many presents were given to the bridegroom. 80. In his former birth he had performed many good deeds, hence the great *Yogi* had taken a rebirth through him, and for that reason this great fortune had come to him. 81. Chāngdev bathed three times a day according to the prescribed rules; the sacred fire was kept burning in his home and guests were lovingly welcomed. 82. At his house he provided free food as a charity, the *Siddhis* (or divine accomplishments) * came to serve him; he wanted for nothing whatever, and in nothing was he dependent on others.

HONOURING FATHER AND MOTHER

83. For twenty-four years Chāngdev lived the life of a householder and during that time he served his parents to their very great delight. 84. There are other sons also, who are troublesome to their parents, and as they grow older they live apart from their parents at the urging of their wives. 85. Bad sons are like worms that issue from the body; those who do not serve their parents are creatures lower than hogs. 86. When he saw the noble Brāhman Pundlik always attentive in the service of his parents, Nārad soon recognized that it was impossible to estimate the value of his good deeds. 87. Having seen this service personally, the son of Brahmadev (i. e., Nārad) was well pleased and he

* See Appendix under ' *Riddhi* ' and ' *Siddhi* . '

hastened to Dwārkā and told Shri Krishna (about Pundlik). 88. Said he, 'O Husband of Rukmini, O God Supreme, Pundlik is so serving his parents that only when you come and see him will your mind be at rest.' 89. Hearing this, Shri Hari arrived at Pundlik's home and there he has remained ever since with His feet upon a brick. 90. Even God is not able to requite anyone for the service rendered to mother and father; and influenced by such sincere *bhakti* He has continued happily to stand at the door. 91. He is beautiful in appearance; both his hands are upon his hips; and a great number of pious *bhaktas* come there to whom he gives a vision of himself. 92. He who wishes to obtain God must show devotion for his mother and father, for thereby he obtains the enjoyment of a good life and final deliverance. 93. All such observances as ceremonial bathing, morning and evening devotions, sacrifices, the repeating of God's names, austerities, going to sacred bathing places, study of the *Vedas*, *Shāstras* and *Purāṇs*, are all useless without reverential service to one's parents.

FUNERAL OF CHĀNGDEV'S FATHER

94. Recognizing the above truth, Chāngdev the great *Yogi* gave great joy to his parents; he would not disobey them in the least thing. 95. After twenty-four years Mudhopant died and his good son Chāngdev was by his bedside and gave to him the penance. 96. His father leaving his body went to the rest of Vaikunth (or Vishnu's heaven) and Rakhmābāi in her sadness went along with him (i. e., she committed *sati* by throwing herself on his funeral pile). 97. After the funeral services were carried out in the prescribed manner the *shrāddha* ceremony (i. e., ancestor worship) was observed, and then going on a great pilgrimage to Benares, he performed there his sacred ablutions with repentance. 98. He spent a great deal of

money for his father's ceremonies at Gayā, and after thus repaying there the gratitude he owed to his sacred parents he turned home. 99. Coming back to Nārāyaṇdohā* Chāṅgdev entered his house, and seeing there the money of his parents he distributed it all to the Brāhmins. 100. He acted very generously by making his paternal uncle the revenue officer of the town. Remembering past relations [and Muktabāi's teaching] he was acting very cautiously.

CHĀNGDEV GOES TO PANDHARPUR

101. Said Chāṅgdev, 'Mother Muktabāi gave me a command that I should go to Pandharī and see the feet of Vithobā. 102. Pandharī is the mother-home of the saints; it is Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu's heaven) brought down to earth; here at the door of Pundlik Shri Hari is standing. 103. Merely seeing this image saves all those of a dull mind; even wicked people there feel the fulness of love to be oozing out of them.' 104. With this purpose in his heart Chāṅgdev started for Pandharī and his heart was full of joy. Said he, 'I must there meet the Husband of Rukmini.' 105. He joined large numbers of pilgrims who were accompanied by singing bands and banners; the drums and *vīṇās* played their sweet music, and the sound reverberated through the sky. 106. In the enthusiasm of his love Chāṅgdev performed *kīrtans* and soon arrived near the sacred city of Pandharī where there was enthusiastic wagging of heads at the shouts of God's name. 107. 'Victory ! Victory !' was heard as with clapping of hands the joyful *bhaktas* came near to Pandharī. 108. Looking at the sacred city from a distance it was a wonderful sight, and a seemingly impossible thing happened, for every one lost his pride and all made prostrate *namaskārs* to one another. 109. All pride of caste and family, all

*Or, Coming back to the Nārāyaṇ Pool (see Chapter VI. 40 and 186 and VII. 39.)

ideas of 'mine' and 'thine' were put aside, and these Brāhmans made a prostrate *namaskār* with love to all of different castes. 110. When Chāngdev saw this he was full of amazement, and he himself put aside all ideas of pride and made prostrate *namaskārs* to all. 111. He made prostrate bows to the saints and *Mahants* and noble Vaishnavs; then embracing one another they continued their journey. 112. Performing *kīrtans* on their way they finally reached Pandharī, and bathing on the banks of the Bhīmā they performed their regular religious ceremonies. 113. After visiting the tomb of Pundlik and worshipping him with the sixteen materials used for worship, they circumambulated the sacred city and then went to pay their respects to the god. 114. At the great door of the temple they prostrated themselves upon the ground; tears flowed from their eyes and they were filled with joy. 115. They exclaimed, 'We have obtained the great purpose of life in having seen Pandharpur with our eyes; today our troubles have vanished and we are full of happiness.' 116. Feeling this joy in their hearts they bowed before Garuda (i. e., the eagle vehicle of Vishnu) and Māruti; they went into the assembly hall and lovingly prostrated themselves there. 117. When they looked into the inner shrine they saw the visible form of the supreme Brahm with His feet placed parallel on a brick and His form all beautiful. 118. Around his waist was the divine yellow garment; his hands were upon his hips and his glorious face looked charming; to look at him took away all thoughts of oneself. 119. A fragrant black powder was scattered over his whole body, on his neck were garlands of tender *tulsī* leaves; as Chāngdev looked at him he embraced the god's neck. 120. Full of a great joy Chāngdev began to sing to His praise, 'Victory to God supreme, to the Husband of Rukmini, the one and only Pervader of the three worlds. 121. O Lord of

Pandharī, Thy living form has descended as an *avatār* to save man in this sea of worldly existence, and by the mere sight of Thee the illusions of Thy *bhaktas* disappear. 122. The moment Thy favour is gained, the snares that bind one to this earthly life are torn asunder; abiding in the hearts of Thy *bhaktas*, Thou speakest to them of the secret things of life. 123. Merely by repeating Thy name great sins are burnt up. The religious practices of those who devote themselves to Thy worship are without hindrances. 124. Servant of Thy servants, Chāṅgdev has come as a suppliant to Thee here, O Lord of Pandharī; now look at me with the eye of Thy compassion and remove the illusions of my earthly life.' 125. As he prayed and praised in this way, tears flowed from his eyes, and in the enthusiasm of his love he prostrated himself at the feet of the god. 126. He fixed the form of the god in his mind and stored it in his imagination; then he went and paid his respects to Satyabhāmā, Rādhā and Rukminī. 127. When he came to the great door of the temple he began a *kīrtan* of praise there in the enthusiasm of love; *bhaktas* shouted 'Victory! Victory!' and the entire sky re-echoed with the sound. 128. They exclaimed, 'O Krishna, Vishnu, Hari, Govind, Achyuta, the infinite One, the supreme Being, *Sacchidānand*, Root of joy, Shrī Vitthal. 129. Lover of Thy *bhaktas*, lotus-eyed One, Wearer of the yellow robe, Life of the world, Father of Brahmadev, Slayer of the demons, Ornament of Thy *bhaktas*, *Guru* of the world. 130. In order to accomplish the final salvation of the dull-minded, Thou didst come to visit Pundlik. Here upon the banks of the Bhīmā Thou standest with Thy hands upon Thy hips. 131. Sinners of all kinds, thieves, immortal men, haters of Brāhmins, and even murderers are saved by merely looking at Thee.'

CHĀNGDEV IN CONTEMPLATION

132. After thus praising the god he sang the sweet final hymn of praise, and waving over the Husband of Rukmini a platter of lights he prostrated himself before him. 133. The festival was observed in this very special way and at the full moon the play of Gopālkālā was performed, and Chāngdev felt very happy over this as he saw an unusual performance. 134. When the pilgrimage broke up he began to see the god of that sacred bathing place in the bed of the river, an experience which no one had had. 135. Desiring to see with his own eyes directly the merciful One to the lowly, the Giver of eternal life gave himself to the performance of austerities. 136. For three days he sat there in earnest contemplation; he took no fruit, no roots and no water, and he kept in his imagination the form in the sacred river. 137. Hearers of this story will have a question arise in their minds, and will ask the speaker, 'In what way was there another idol by the Chandrabhāgā river?' 138. Listen then to the very interesting story which is found in the *Āndurang Māhātmya*. Shri Vyās told it with his own lips, how the Soul of the world came to Pandhari in the form of the sacred river.

GOD REVEALS HIMSELF AS RIVER-GOD

139. The noble Vaishnav (Krishna) in his form as city god stood in the form of an image on a brick. As a water god he was invisible in the water of the Chandrabhāgā, where Shridhar lives invisible. 140. Near to the place where the *Muni* Pundlik lies with his divine body, Chakrapāni (i. e., Krishna) is there and over him flows the Bhmrathi river. 141. In order to see that divine form with his own eyes Chāngdev sat down to the performance of austerities exclaiming, 'O God Supreme, Giver of eternal life, I am hungry to have a sight of Thee.' 142. The great *Yogī* continued his

austerities for three days, and recognizing Chāṅgdev's faith of mind the compassionate One revealed Himself. 143. Chāṅgdev's *bhakti* was of but one kind, sincere; therefore the image of Pāṇdurang appeared in his heart, just like the form that is described by *Yogīs* which gives peace of mind. 144. His feet were parallel on a brick, both His hands were upon his hips, His face was exceedingly beautiful and attractive, and simply to look at him took away all thought of self. 145. His crown, the earrings, the Vaijayanti as His chief jewel, the lustre of the yellow robe around His waist, the Shriwatsa jewel with its lustre, and the crocodile-shaped earrings, made him beautiful. 146. In this form Shri Hari manifested Himself and said to Chāṅgdev, 'Now give attention and look at me with your eyes.' 147. Chāṅgdev marvelling in his mind thought to himself, 'I am alone here on the banks of the Bhīmā and it is now midnight. Who spoke these words to me?' 148. When he opened his eyes, he saw a wonder that Brahmadev and the other gods desire to see, and which poets describe. 149. A most brilliant light spread in all directions, just as if a million suns had suddenly arisen, and seeing such a beautiful and brilliant form his mind experienced peace. 150. Seeing with his eyes the form of Shri Krishna his heart was touched; he made a prostrate *namaskār* and he could not contain his love. 151. He exclaimed, 'O God, save me, save me. Look at me with Thine eye, O merciful One. Deliver me out of this sea of worldly existence.' 152. Having said this he reverently placed his head at the god's feet, saying, 'O Saviour of the lowly, O Lord of Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu's heaven), O Saviour of the universe, and *Guru* of the world. 153. I am Thy darling one, and I call myself one who is suppliant to Thee; when this body has accomplished its purpose, give me the power of Thy favour.'

154. With a humble prayer he began with love his praise: 'Victory! victory to Thee whose form is a spirit; Thou art the one who dost pervade the three worlds. 155. Victory! victory to Thee, who dwellest upon the sea of milk. Victory! victory to Thee who art Lord of Vaikunth. Victory! victory to Thee, Lord of Thy *bhaktas* who dost appear in the form of the non-dual Pāndurang. 156. Victory! victory to Thee, who didst take the form of the Fish, Slayer of the Demon Shankha, victory to Thee who hast the form of a tortoise at the churning of the sea. Victory to Thee, who didst appear in the form of the wild boar, the Slayer of the demons, the ornament of the universe, and Lord of the universe. 157. Victory to Thee! Protector of Pralhād, who art half man and half lion. Victory to Thee! the Trivikram (i. e., Vishnu) stood at the door of King Bali. Victory to Thee, Holder of the axe, Slayer of the Kshatriyas and Advocate of the Brāhmins. 158. Victory to Thee, friend of the gods, slayer of Rāvan. Victory to Thee! son of Nanda, slayer of Kans; Victory to Thee! Protector of Thy *bhaktas*, friend of the Pāndavs, and Establisher of religious and moral laws, Shri Krishna. 159. Victory to Thee, *avatār* in the form of Buddha, and Life of the world. Victory to Thee, who in the form of the *Kalki avatār* wilt be the slayer of the foreigner. Taking many forms of *avatār* Thou dost establish the various religious and moral laws. 160. Victory to Thee, Giver of blessing to Pundlik, Husband of Rukminī. If I should attempt properly to praise thee how impossible it would be! Even the *Shāstras* find it an impossible task. 161. I am without proper service to Thee, without *bhakti* or knowledge or indifference to worldly things, still I call myself a humble suppliant, that I may be fed by Thy grace.' 162. Hearing these words of praise from Chāngdev, the Husband of Rukminī became pleased and said, 'If you have any special desire let me

know what it is. 163. I will fulfill all the desires of your heart. Put away all ideas of duality, and tell me at once what you desire.' 164. The merciful One having spoken these words Chāṅgdev was full of happiness and said, 'Show Thy favour to me in a way that will give peace to my heart; 165. so that the moment the *mantra* falls upon my ears I may acquire at once enjoyment and final deliverance, by which also I may be able to be a benefactor to my fellow men; this is all I would ask for.' 166. Hearing this request, Pandharināth took hold of Chāṅgdev's hand and dashed with him into the water. 167. As they dived under, Chāṅgdev's eyes saw a seemingly impossible thing, a golden pavilion sparkling with jewels. 168. This was such a sight as men have never seen, because it was hidden beneath the ground, and the Friend of *bhaktas* pointed it out to Chāṅgdev, his God-loving Vaishnav; 169. Pundlik the great Rishi was there with his divine body, and God Supreme, the Husband of Rukminī was standing before him. 170. The incomparable arrangements of Vaikunth (heaven) were there. How can I with my common mind rightly describe it? 171. Chāṅgdev was taken to this place because of his special good fortune, and the Life of the world showing him compassion he gave him a blessing in the form of a *mantra*. 172. Shri Hari gave to him a six-syllable *mantra* which was given to Sanak and the others, by placing His hand of assurance upon their head. 173. Chakrapāṇi (i. e., Krishna) gave to Chāṅgdev this life-giving nectar of a *mantra* consisting of the name which brings a direct revelation of God and brings the dead to life. 174. Telling him this much the Husband of Rukminī in His love gave him a promise saying, 'I must give you my assurance, so let your heart be full of joy.' 175. The Lover of His *bhaktas* having thus spoken, He brought him back to the net of his former

illusions; so when Chāngdev opened his eyes, the holy city looked as it did before. 176. As the Life of the world surrounded Chāngdev again in this illusion, Chāngdev came out of the water full of amazement. 177. He said to himself, 'The Husband of Rukmini has had mercy upon me. God has given men a direct manifestation of Himself. He gave me the *mantra* of six syllables, and as I try to recollect I remember it.' 178. He was full of supreme joy, and said there was no limit to his good fortune; he then hastened into the sacred city to worship the image of Pāndurang. 179. He worshipped the Husband of Rukmini with sixteen materials, and waving lights he made a prostrate *namaskār* and stored the form of Pāndurang in his heart. 180. Said he, 'O Vithābāi, O merciful One, I am now going back to my town; so continue Thy love.' As he said this the tears were flowing down his face.

CHĀNGDEV RETURNS HOME

181. After taking leave of the god and circumambulating the city, keeping it to his right and taking leave of Pundlik, he started with all his attendants. 182. He walked along the road thinking of Pandharpur; again and again he looked back, and tears of love flowed down his face. 183. He continued singing the name of Vitthal and praising His good deeds, turning many men to the *bhakti* [of Krishna], for the association of saints is hard to find. 184. Those who wish to attain God must seek association with saintly people; there is no other way. 185. Many people were turned to *bhakti* by association with Chāngdev; they heard from him the goodness of Hari, and they sang about Him in their love. 186. In this way the noble *bhakta* quickly arrived at Nārāyandoha.* The people of the town came out and made their *namaskārs* to him.

* Or, at the Nārāyan Pool (See VI. 40, 99 and VII. 39).

187. As these citizens met Chāṅgdev they felt the happiness of love, and then with cymbal, *vīṇā* and many kinds of drums they all joined in the singing. 188. Bands of musicians with banners of many kinds played their sweet music at the head of the processions; they scattered fragrant powders, and put garlands of flowers around his neck. 189. With this enthusiastic exhibition of joy Chāṅgdev returned to his home, then took the platter of five lights and reverently waved it over Shri Hari. 190. He prostrated himself in his love, gave favours to every one, and people said to one another, 'Blessed is this happy day.' 191. In the next chapter the relator of the wonderful events is the Husband of Rukminī who places his hand of assurance upon me, Mahīpati, but he Himself speaks. 192. *Suasti* (Peace) ! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmrit*; by merely hearing it the desires of the heart are satisfied ; let the God-loving pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the sixth interesting delightful chapter. It is an offering to Shri Krishna, and also to Rāmchandra.

CHAPTER VII

LIFE OF CHĀNGDEV

(Continued)

FRUITS OF GOD'S FAVOUR

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Listen, O pious God-loving hearers. When the Merciful to the lowly looks upon one with favour,* even the dumb become fluent speakers and explain the teaching of every *Shāstra*. 2. Through the power of Shri Hari's favour the lame may climb over high mountains, the mere pebble of the field at once becomes a *paris* (a touchstone that turns iron into gold), 3. and the *khair* and *bābhul* trees may become wish-trees. If the *Guru* of the world shows his favour, life in this world will be full of joy. 4. Even should one drink virulent poison, it could become like nectar; mere pebbles might become a *chintāman* (a stone giving what is desired) provided the Cloud of Compassion is pleased. 5. A cruel enemy who even kills us may become one who loves us, and servants of *Yama*, the lord of death, will run away from him whom the Holder of the Shārang Bow (i. e., Krishna) protects. 6. If anyone is drowning, Shri Hari will protect him by assuming the form of a tortoise and by taking him on his back and carrying him to the other side of the river. 7. Through His favour, that can take place which otherwise could never take place; such is my experience. Listen to it therefore as a testimony from experience. 8. People know me, Mahipati, every-

* Verses 1 and 2 refer to a Sanskrit verse contained in the Preface to the *Bhagavadgītā* and *Bhāgavat Purān*, a Preface written by the poet Shridhar. Put into English dress it is as follows:-
' I praise God who makes the dumb to talk and who makes the lame to climb over mountains.'

where, as one dull of mind and lacking in intelligence. The true relator of these stories is doing this work by the hand of a dullard ; this is one of Shripati's (Krishna's) clever deeds.

CHĀNGDEV AT PANDHARPUR

9. In the last chapter was the beautiful story about Chāngdev seeing the sacred city of Pandharpur, how the Husband of Rukminī became pleased with him, how he gave him a *mantra* of six syllables, 10. and how taking leave of the god, accompanied by his family, he returned home. In waking moments, in deep sleep and in dreams his mind was filled with thoughts of Pāndurang. 11. Hearing, meditating, and performance of Hari-*kīrtans* continued all the time as did the reading of the Vedānta, and people in love came to listen ; 12. just as birds gather of their own accord to be fed ; or as ants gather together because of their love of sugar ; 13. or as when the moon rises, the chakor bird gazes at it with reverence ; or as when the sun rises, the lotus appears in full blossom ; 14. or as when a king sits on his throne after having conquered the country, his army and his wealth gather around him ; or as near a generous giver, beggars gather with worldly desires in their hearts ; 15. in the same way pious God-loving people were always to be found sitting near Changdev, and in listening and meditating they spent all their time.

CHĀNGDEV TO GO TO THE GODĀVARI

16. After some days had passed a very interesting thing happened as Changdev was worshipping mentally, the Dweller in Pandhari (Krishna) appeared before him. 17. Chāngdev suddenly saw before him the visible form of the Supreme Brahm as possessing qualities. In His hand He had the conk shell, the disk and the bow ; in His ears were the crocodile ear-rings ; 18. around His waist was

the divine yellow robe and His glorious face appeared most beautiful ; on His ankles were his ankle ornaments and His whole form was most pleasing to look at. 19. Such was the dark-complexioned form which at that moment the Supreme Brahm assumed and as Chāngdev opened his eyes he looked at the god's lotus-like feet. 20. Chāngdev having worshipped Hari with all the materials for worship, he was pleased and Pāndurang said to him, 'Go and live now by the Godāvarī river.' 21. Chāngdev then asked, 'O *Adhokshajī* (i. e., Vishnu), whom should I make the constant object of my worship ? My reverence and love, where can I place these, O eagle-bannered One (i. e., Krishna).' 22. To this request of the God-loving *bhaktā*, the Dark-complexioned One (i. e., Krishna) was pleased ; and immediately there appeared before him a stone image of Keshav (Krishna). 23. Pāndurang then said, 'I, Hari, have truly entered into this image, so you go and live by the Godāvarī river and worship this image with all the materials for worship.' 24. After speaking in this way the god vanished, but he remained hidden in Chāngdev's heart. 25. Then Chāngdev said to the townspeople, 'I am going to take my family to live on the banks of the Godāvarī river.' 26. Thus informed by the great *Yogī*, the townspeople felt great alarm and exclaimed, 'If you should leave us now we shall have no support in our worldly life.' 27. After listening to their words of pleading Chāngdev gave them his words of assurance and said, 'Whatever wishes your hearts demand shall at once be fulfilled.' 28. Then with his own hand he installed a stone there, saying, 'It will fulfill the desire of anyone according as he makes a vow.' 29. This miraculous object is still there to-day, and through it anyone has all things he desires according to his faith. 30. In this way Chāngdev comforted his fellow-townsmen, and then with his family he set off

from there. 31. In order to send off the great *Yogī* on his journey all the people, young and old, went along with him, and men and women wept, for their hearts were full of love. 32. They exclaimed, 'In the going away of our *Swāmī* we have become unlucky, but the gate of fortune has opened for the fortunate people living on the banks of the Godāvarī river.' 33. In this way the townsmen showed their sorrow; just as when the Lord of the World (i. e., Krishna) was leaving Mathurā and the whole town of Gokul became sad. 34. For just as God is, so are His *bhaktas*; there is no difference between them; like the honey in the flowers, they are exactly alike. 35. Gold and its lustre are two names, but the two things are one, and a pearl and its lustre cannot be spoken of as consisting of two things. 36. The sun and its rays are really one but they go under two names; and nectar and its taste are two only in name. 37. As there is nectar in the region of the moon and as there are waves in the ocean, and milk in a cow, so God and His *bhaktas* are of one nature. 38. When *bhaktas* increase, God is glorified, and in return God gives His love to His servants and you and I experience happy days, in listening to His stories and praising His name. 39. The men and women living near to Nārāyaṇdohā* could not bear the separation from Chāṅgdev, but after seeing him on his way they returned. 40. Those who held in reverence the stone installed by the great *Yogī* had all their wishes at once fulfilled; this great miracle belongs to that place.

CHĀṆGDEV AT THE GODĀVARĪ

41. Taking along with him the image of Keshav (i. e., Krishna), Chāṅgdev journeyed along, always with the Husband of Rukminī in his contemplation and his whole

Or, the Nārāyaṇ Pool (see Chapter VI. 40, 99 and 186).

self fully engrossed. 42. With his family Chāngdev arrived at *Punyas'ambha* (i. e., modern Puntāmbā) and on getting sight of the Godāvari river he made (to its river-goddess) a prostrate *namaskār*. 43. With repentance in his heart he bathed in that holy river, exclaiming, ' Oh mother goddess, destroy at once the snare that fastens me to this earthly existence and give me *sāyujya mukti* (i. e., the highest form of final deliverance). 44. Your source is entirely from the feet of Shri Vishnu, therefore the Lord of Kailās (i. e., Shiva) lovingly holds you on His head. 45. The very great *Muni* Gautama pleased Shri Shiva and brought this river to this world of mortals in order to save the world. 46. The moment your pure water falls on one's sight, the sins of a hundred births are removed, and by bathing in your waters a man becomes pure for a thousand births. 47. Thus through my good fortune I have seen you, oh Godāvari river, a saviour of the world. Look upon me with your eye of mercy, and give me a place at your source.' 48. Thus praising the river goddess he finished his bathing and all the regular ceremonies, and then went to see and worship Shiva. 49. After bathing in the sacred *Soma* pond, he went and took *darshana* (vision) of Rāmeshwar, and in love worshipped the god there with the sixteen materials for worship. 50. He offered one lakh of *bilva* leaves to the moon-headed god (i. e., Shiva), and after offering to him a handful of flowers, in company with his disciples he sat down. 51. By this time the cooking was ready and he performed the five daily sacrifices, and seating the Brāhman guests in rows by his side he finished the meal. 52. Then bowing to the command of Shri Pāndurang he built a *math* (a religious house) on the banks of the Godāvari, and there installed the beautiful image of Shri Keshavrāja (i. e., Krishna). 53. Calling the distinguished Brāhmans together they bathed the idol while repeating the Vedic

mantras and then bathed the Lord of Vaikunth with the five nectars.† 54. Dressed in his brilliant garments, adorned with jewels, covered with perfume, rice, flowers and the sandalwood paste, he was waved over with incense and the platter of lights. 55. Tasty food having been cooked, the chief offering of the meal was made to him, and after the distribution of the *Pānsupārī* * and gifts of gold, the company walked around the god. 56. After having worshipped the Lord of Vaikunth in this way Chāṅgdev prostrated himself before the god, saying, 'O Keshav (i. e., Krishna) I fail in my service to thee and now I come as a suppliant; save me, a sinner.' 57. The day on which they installed the idol was an auspicious day. Offerings were made to the Brāhmans, and the twice-born were served with many tasty kinds of food. 58. With the distribution of the *pānsupārī* and the gifts the twice-born were very pleased, and people everywhere heard of the great fame of Chāṅgdev's deeds. 59. Hearing of his reputation pilgrims from different countries came to see him and the wishes of both rich and poor were fulfilled. 60. He was formerly a worshipper of Shiva, and in his *abhangs* (verses) he uses the name of Chāṅgā Vateshwar; the Vaishnav *bhaktas* knew all about this. 61. But now on the Godāvarī river at *Punyastambha* (i. e., modern Puntāmbā) he installed an image of Keshav (i. e., Krishna), and at the end of his poetic verses he calls himself Chāṅgā Keshavdās (i. e., Chāṅgdev, the servant of Krishna). 62. Shri Pāndurang becoming pleased gave him a *mantra* of six syllables, and by meditation upon it he received a direct manifestation of God. 63. People everywhere said of him, 'Formerly Vateshwar (i. e., Shiva) manifested himself to Chāṅgdev but now the Husband of Rukminī has become pleased and has

† See *Stories of Indian Saints*, II, p. 437, under the word *Panchāmrit*.

* See Appendix under *Pānsupārī*.

given him the life-giving *mantra*.' 64. Wishing for that same gift people came to him from afar; their desires were fulfilled and thereby his fame increased.

RĀMRĀJĀ, KING OF DEVGIRI

65. Chāngdev's reputation thus spread to other countries far and wide, and Rāmrājā who was at Devgiri (i. e., modern Daulatābād) heard of him. 66. With supreme reverence he came to visit Chāngdev, praising him in many ways and making a prostrate *namaskār* before him. 67. Desirous of seeing some miracle performed he stood before Chāngdev and, joining hands palm to palm, the king continued gazing at him. 68. Chāngdev then said to him, ' Come here with your army and your officials.' Hearing this command of the *yogī* he at once sent written orders. 69. When the king's orders were received the ministers came at once bringing the army, and in order to show them a miracle Chāngdev sent them a personal invitation. 70. Without any cooking, all were invited to sit down and partake, and as they did so the six kinds of dainty food appeared on their plates, making a very delightful appearance. 71. More than a thousand people sat down to the feast and the desires of all were immediately satisfied; whatever each one desired to please his own taste, was served, and every one was astonished. 72. After the water for washing their hands, *pāṇsapārī* of a very fine quality was given, and Rāmrājā watching this miracle spoke softly to Chāngdev. 73. Said he, ' Blessed is this happy day on which I have seen my *Suāmī*. You are a true portion of God come to save the world. 74. Just like God's miraculous deeds, so are the deeds of the saints; there is no difference between them; many have seen this from their personal experience with them.' 75. Then with hands joined palm to palm the king made him this request, ' Come now and live in my garden; the banks of the Godāvarī are near.' 76. Chāngdev accepted

the invitation and seeing this the people were astonished. 77. Taking his family along with him Chāṅgdev went to live in the king's garden, and bathing in the *Somatīrtha* (i. e., a sacred pond in the Godāvārī) he worshipped God there. 78. After making Chāṅgdev a *namaskār* the king returned to his palace, and then a most wonderful event occurred to which I ask you to listen, you pious and reverent ones.

CHĀṅGDEV DESIRES A LIVING BURIAL

79. Twelve years had passed in his stay at *Punyastambha* (i. e., Puntāmbā) and during that time for the festivals *Ashādh Ekādashī* (June or July) and *Kārtik Ekādashī* (October or November) he regularly went to Pandharī. 80. On a certain day having collected together all the saints and *Rishis*, Keshavdās (i. e., the servant of Krishna) said to them, 'I am going to take *Samādhi* (i. e., to have a living burial).' 81. Understanding what was in their *yogī*'s mind, his disciples made preparations for the event and offerings were made to the Brāhmans as they waited for an auspicious day. 82. The Vaishnav *bhaktas* came together and a *kīrtan* was held, and the bands of musicians and Haridāśas came there shouting God's name. 83. Chāṅgdev, seated on his glorious seat, daily performed his worship and the people came to see and worship Chāṅgdev, bringing many kinds of things with which to show their reverence for him. 84. News spread abroad that the great *yogī* was to have himself buried alive, and pilgrims came from afar to see the act, when suddenly a most remarkable thing took place.

CHĀṅGDEV AND THE WIDOW

85. In Kalyān Kalburgā there lived a noble Brāhman by name of Shankar. He was a very wealthy man, but he had no son. 86. For before he could have a son he entered the abode of the dead; when his young wife afterwards

arrived at physical maturity, his mother was much distressed. 87. The funeral rites were performed by someone who was adopted in place of the son, and the mother taking the bones (of her dead son) she started in deep grief on a great pilgrimage to Benares. 88. The mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law started off with letters of credit for the expenses of the journey and they rode on horseback. 89. As they journeyed along they arrived at *Punyastambha* (i. e., Puntāmbā), and found lodgings in the house of a Brāhman where they remained for three days. 90. While there they saw people coming with cocoanuts, fragrant powders and *tulsī* to be used in the worship of Chāngdev who was to sit for his living burial, and people were flocking to see him. 91. As I have said, the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law had taken lodgings in a certain house and Sonāī (the mother-in-law) prepared to go to see the *Swāmī*. 92. The daughter-in-law said to her mother-in-law, 'I will come with you.' But the older one said, 'The great *yogī* might suddenly get angry with you; 93. for your hair has not been shaven off, and as you make a *namaskār* your touch may pollute him; if so the great man will be angry, and then what should we do?' 94. Although admonished in many words she would not listen but went with her mother-in-law, not realizing what might happen. 95. Many men and women were flocking to see Chāngdev, and these two went with them. Thus in the midst of a dense crowd they made their *namaskār* to the great *yogī*. 96. Then upon this widow going on the great pilgrimage with her mother-in-law Chāngdev bestowed the blessing, 'Mother, become the mother of a son.' Hearing this the Brāhmans laughed among themselves. 97. They said, 'That would be like a cloud raining upon a rock, or like seed falling into a furnace; for to-day the *Swāmī* gave a promise without thinking,

and without finding out the true facts. 98. It is like trying to kindle a fire when there is no wood to burn, or like pushing the wick up when there is no oil; likewise the *Suāmī*'s blessing has become useless, so we think.' 99. The great *yogī* said to Sonāī, 'What are the Brāhmans saying? Tell me the story from beginning to end.' 100. Thus addressed, both began to weep; their throats were choked with emotion and their eyes were filled with tears. 101. Sonāī then replied, 'We were living many days in Kalyān Kalburgā, and there my son died. 102. In this earthly life I have experienced a mountain of sorrow; my son had no son and his death meant the loss of all descendants; 103. then we two, daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, started from there and we came to a place which people call Jogāyiche Ambā, where we remained for a while. 104. We had no peace of mind there and so we are on our way on the great pilgrimage to Benares. Such is the story of our lives which we have told the *Suāmī*. 105. We belong to the *Yajurveda* branch, and we are taking these bones of my son with us, a desire having arisen in our hearts to perform the usual ceremonies at Gayā. 106. On our way to Kāshī (i. e., Benares) we arrived here by the Godāvarī river and are remaining here for three days to perform the proper rites at a place of pilgrimage. 107. Hearing the great fame of the *Suāmī* I have come here to see you, and I tried to persuade my daughter-in-law not to come but she would not listen. 108. When we came here she made you a *namaskār* and from your lips came the words, "You will have a son." 109. How can that happen? How can this widow have a child?' And the tears flowed down her face as she told her story.

CHANGDEV'S CRITICS

110. Hearing Sonāī's words the great *yogī* was filled with compassion, and he said, 'Though without knowing her

history I gave the blessing, yet it cannot turn out untrue.' 111. Then he prayed, 'O Lord of Pandharī, Husband of Rukminī, make my promise true.' Pleading thus with God, he then said to the Brāhman woman, 112. 'Bring your son's bones and come here quickly.' The great *yogī* having said this an unprecedented event now began to take place. 113. Chāngdev called all the learned pundits of the sacred town who were expert in the *Shāstras* and said to them, 'Without knowing what I was doing I gave this promise. 114. Until that promise is fulfilled I cannot sit for my burial alive, and I have called you here to bear witness that I am going to give her the son I have promised.' 115. He then washed the bones in water and muttered over them the life-giving *mantra*, and when he gave the widow the water to drink all the people watched what might happen. 116. Now took place the good man's miracle. A child-shadow passed over the widow while Chāngdev was praying, 'O God Supreme, O King of Pandharī, have mercy upon her.' 117. The moment he said this, she seemed like one who had a husband, for the sad appearance she had recently shown now suddenly changed to a happy one. 118. After all this had happened, the twice-born returned to their lodgings, but on their way home reviling words were used by some people such as, 'We are now going to have a mixture of castes.' 119. Chāngdev had thought out a very wonderful plan, for the widow appeared happy, as if she had a husband. She and every such woman are described as having Vitthal for a husband, and the same expression is still in use. 120. Some said, 'He repeats all sorts of *mantras* and having learned their charms he is performing many miracles through them.' 121. Some wicked-minded people said, 'He is the real father and how will the child be received by the caste? Consider this well.' 122. Thus the Brāhman citizens of the town

gossiped, some blaming, some praising, but they did not say this in his presence, for those people were like owls. 123. A brave man will not attack a man who acts in the dark, so knowing what was in men's minds the great *yogī* said nothing. 124. He thought to himself, 'I will first wait for the child to appear, and then I will sit for my burial alive, for if I do not do so, these evil-minded people will repeat all kinds of scandal.' 125. Vaishnavs are saved through worshipping God, and death and destruction are subject to them; they have no births or deaths, although people may think they have them.

A WIDOW RECEIVES A SON

126. Chāṅgdev had the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law remain there at *Punyasthambha* (i. e., *Puntāmbā*) and as soon as the nine months had passed, a beautiful son was born. 127. As soon as the great *yogī* heard that the child promised by Pāṇdurang was born he made a great festival and gave great satisfaction to the twice-born by his gifts. 128. On the twelfth day the ceremony was held and he was given the name of Vitthal; day by day he grew and his mother was full of joy. 129. From the time the widow had conceived, Chāṅgdev had given her a place in his hermitage; for he was a man of great kindness to others, and that was why he provided for her so carefully. 130. Through the power of Shri Pāṇdurang's mercy the child now reached five years of age, so the God-loving *bhakta* said, 'We should now invest him with the sacred thread.' 131. Every one knew that this was the child of a widow, but they added, 'His greatness has accepted her, so our opinions are of no value.' 132. Because these Brāhmins showed no interest in the investment of the sacred thread, Chāṅgdev through his inner light understood the minds of all. 133. So he said to the two women, 'Let us go to Pandharpur

with our followers and tell your whole story to Pāndurang the Friend of the lowly.' 134. Then with cymbal, *vinā* and drum making their sweet music, praising God in their love as they journeyed along, Chāngdev and all his followers reached the sacred city of Pandharī. 135. After bathing in the Chandrabhāgā they visited Pundlik's tomb and then after walking around the city they entered into the temple. 136. There Chāngdev bowed prostrate lovingly at the eagle-platform, and entering into the inner shrine he looked upon God in a visible form. 137. His whole appearance was beautiful, his glorious face was charming, he had his hands upon his hips and the yellow robe around his waist. 138. His feet were parallel on the brick; around his neck was a garland of jewels; his body was covered with fragrant powders; and from his crown priceless jewels flashed. 139. Such was the visible form of the Supreme Brahm which Chāngdev lovingly embraced, and completely losing self-consciousness he bowed with reverence at the god's feet. 140. The Merciful to the Lowly then asked him, 'Do you bring happy news?' Chāngdev replied, 'I do indeed, through the power of your mercy.' 141. Then placing at Vithobā's feet the child that had come by his promise to the widow, he exclaimed, 'Let your mercy rest upon him.' The Husband of Rukminī then said, 'I will.' 142. Chāngdev then continued, 'O Shri Hari, trusting Thee I gave her this promise that she would see her child and grandchildren in her home without suffering any scandals.'

THE WONDROUS WORK OF AVATĀRS

143. Hearing him say this the Cloud of Mercy replied, 'I will carry out your promise, for it is to carry out promises of men like you that I had to become an *avatār*. 144. In order to become the advocate of *bhaktas* I once became an

avatār in the form of a fish, then of a wild boar, and when Pralhād called on my help I immediately revealed myself in the pillar. 145. When Indra called upon me I, the Dark-complexioned One, became Trivikrama (i. e., the *avatār* of Vāman) and I begged of Bali and afterwards became his door-keeper. 146. On account of the promise of Jamadagni I at once killed my mother, and the Lord of the world by his own hand cleared the world of the Kshatriyas twenty-one times. 147. As an *avatār* in the form of Rāma I killed Dashānan (i.e., ten-headed demon Rāvan) and established Bibhīshan over his kingdom. I gave him the country of Ceylon and made him immortal. 148. I then became an *avatār* in the form of Shri Krishna and attended the cows of Nand. When the Pāndavs fell into difficulty I used many methods to protect them. 149. And more recently on account of the extreme devotion of Pundlik I came to visit him. Placing my feet exactly parallel upon the brick I remained standing on the banks of the Bhīmā. 150. When Nāmā the tailor, the God-loving *bhakta*, fell into difficulty I immediately turned the temple around* at Odhyā Nāgnāth and fulfilled his desire. 151. According to the request of Dnyāndev I at once moved the wall and you have already heard the story of Chāngdev. 152. In the same way I the Dark-complexioned One will fulfill the desire of this child of promise; do not have the least concern regarding this.' So said the Merciful to the lowly. 153. At these words of the Husband of Rukminī, Chāngdev was deeply moved, and tears of joy flowed from his eyes; he could not contain his happiness.

BRAHMAN'S REFUSE THE SACRED THREAD

154. He placed his head at the god's feet and then immediately came out of the temple, and encamping on the river bed he began his enthusiastic *kīrtans*. 155. At

* See *Stories of Indian Saints* I, p. 201.

early morning he would bathe in the Chandrabhāgā, and after performing the regular and the occasional rites he did as follows. 156. He called together all the earth gods (i. e., Brāhmanas) of the sacred city and explained to them in very sweet words; 157. ' I gave this widow my blessing by which she gave birth to this child of promise. Now honour my word and invest him with the sacred thread.' 158. After listening to the words of this *yogi*, the Brāhmanas looked down upon the idea with contempt. Said one, 'How can one who is born of a widow find entrance into our caste? 159. We cannot become responsible for the grave fault of doing what is forbidden.' Having said this they all got up and left. 160. One remarked, 'It is the child of some wicked person.' Others said, 'It is through the *yogic* powers, for they are able to do wonderful things which we do not understand.' 161. Still another remarked, 'The noble Vaishnav, Chāṅgdev, became an *avatār* of the *Marudgana* (one of the forty-nine immortals,) and it looks as though he was proposing a mixture of castes.' 162. Another observed, 'The Brāhmanas on the banks of the Godāvarī put him out of caste and then he came here to Pandhari the sacred city of a very simple-minded people.' 163. After this the Brāhmanas got up and left and the boy's mother began to cry as she looked upon the face of Chāṅgdev; 164. but the great *yogi* gave her his assurance, saying she should not be worried in the least, and that the Husband of Rukminī had taken the responsibility on his own head, and he would overcome every difficulty. 165. 'You will be free from the scandal of people, and will see with your own eyes your son and your son's sons.' After she had thus listened to the one who had given the promise her mind rested in peace. 166. Chāṅgdev then said to her, 'Prepare a feast to-day for a hundred Brāhmanas and Shri Hari will come to the feast, be assured of this.' 167. As he

said this to her he went into the temple, performed a *kir'an* full of love, and then pleaded with the Husband of Rukmini. 168. He said, 'O God Supreme, Ruler of the world, come to the feast I have prepared on the bed of the river. Look with compassion on the child of the promise at this time of his difficulty, O Lord of the world. 169. Thou art the Protector of the lowly, the Advocate of Thy *bhaktas*, so is it said universally. Now make this true.' Listening to this, Shri Hari said, 'Yes, I will come.'

THE WIDOW'S FEAST

170. After paying respect to the wishes of Chāṅgdev, the mother of the child of promise finished her preparations for the feast and invited the Brāhmans to it. 171. After listening to the invitations, the Brāhmans said to her, 'You have been turned out of caste. Why have you prepared a feast? There will be no one to eat it. 172. Your husband has gone to the house of death, and how is it you have had a son? Why are you not ashamed of showing him to the public?' 173. Hearing the words of these evil-minded people the Brāhman woman became very much ashamed, and now as she thought of the feet of Chāṅgdev she cried out, 'O my *Sadguru*, hasten to my help.' 174. As she was thus thinking over the matter, Keshavdās Chāṅgdev suddenly appeared and said, 'The Lord of Pandhari has come to the feast; get it ready quickly.' 175. On account of the *bhakti* of Chāṅgdev, God had come from the temple, and when Vaishnav *bhaktas* went there they found to their surprise that the Supreme God was not there. 176. One said, 'He must have run away.' Another said, 'Chāṅgdev must have taken him away; because of his special love He has gone to eat with him on the sands of the river.' 177. Those who had no feelings of devotion exclaimed, 'How can a stone image walk?' But when they came to the sandy bed and looked,

He was not visible even there. 178. The Brāhman inhabitants of the sacred city came together and said, 'What indeed has happened to Vithobā? Who have we now to care for us?' And they broke out into loud lamentations. 179. The temple looked fearfully empty, just as does a body without a soul, for the Husband of Rukminī was not upon His throne, and they exclaimed, 'What ought we to do about it?' 180. The supremely Good Being came to Pandhari when He saw the love of Pundlik, and we are able to carry on our profession only because of that.' 181. In this way did the Brāhman community show their anxiety, and all at once they arose and came to where Chāngdev was. 182. They said to him with their own lips, 'The image [of Krishna] is not to be seen in the temple. If you have performed any strange trick we must know of it at once.'

BRĀHMANS WON OVER

183. Hearing what these Brāhmans said the loving *bhakta* replied, 'Because you turned the widow out of caste the Husband of Rukminī has come here to dine.' 184. The Brāhmans exclaimed, 'We see no evidence of this.' If, however, one has not the spirit of devotion the Recliner on the Serpent cannot be seen. 185. Chāngdev had this spirit of *bhakti* and the beautiful image was quite visible to him, but the Lord of the Universe was not visible to others. 186. That this idea could not be false was clear from the fact that the image was not in the temple. Because of the doubt which arose in their minds the Brāhmans were much perplexed. 187. They therefore said to Chāngdev, 'If this food which has been prepared is sufficient for all of us, we shall feel it to be real evidence that the Husband of Rukminī is present.' 188. Hearing these remarks of the Brāhmans, Chāngdev replied, 'Go at once and perform your baths and Vithobā will furnish all that is necessary.' 189. When the chief of the *yogīs* had thus

spoken to the Brāhmans, they sat down in line to eat. Two thousand plates were set, but they were not sufficient for the Brāhmans who had assembled. 190. The castes belonging to the sacred city came to the sandy bed to partake of the favour there; and the Brāhmans said to Chāᅅgdev, 'Satisfy the appetites of all these also. 191. If the food which has been cooked will prove sufficient for all, then alone will it be proof that the Husband of Rukmiᅅi has come here, and that this widow has borne a legitimate son, and then we will immediately invest him with the sacred thread.' 192. To this proposition of the Brāhmans, Keshavdās (Chāᅅgdev) replied, 'The mother and the son will do the serving of the feast, and the food will be sufficient for all.' 193. Saying this he sprinkled water over the food, and said to the mother and her son, 'Dish out the rice on their plates. 194. As you continue taking out the rice from the vessel, do not turn it upside down and by the grace of Pandurang you will find the food will be sufficient.'

PĀNDURANG AT THE FEAST

195. Instructed by the *yogī*, the mother and the son acted accordingly and as they served the rice it was not exhausted, at which all the Brāhmans marvelled. 196. Then the Brāhmans exclaimed, 'Truly this woman is the legitimate wife of Vithobā and as we are convinced of this we should all eat the food prepared by her; there is no cause to hesitate.' 197. The pious people of the sacred city learned of this affair and to get the favour they also came and sat down beside the leaf-plates. 198. They remarked to one another, 'The image of Pāndurang, the Supreme Brahm, has come to eat at the feast because of Chāᅅgdev's *bhakti*. Let no one now hesitate to eat.' 199. Thus speaking to one another, the citizens of the sacred city sat down, each opposite his

leaf-plate. Then the food-offering ceremony was made by the words: ‘The Husband of Rukminī is the enjoyer of this feast.’ 200. Whatever food appealed to anyone’s taste, that he found already on his plate. All were astonished and exclaimed, ‘Blessed is this happy day.’ 201. If the ocean should come and sit in a great jar, the whole of the three worlds would have sufficient water to drink; and if Indirā (or Lakshmi, wife of Vishnu) became the family cook, there would be no lack of food. 202. If the sun held a lamp in his hand there would be no darkness upon the earth; and if the moon held a fan how could there be any heat upon the earth? 203. If a king-emperor out of love came to the feast of one who was poor, everything that was needed would be there without any effort. 204. Wherever on the earth Indra may be sitting there can be no lack of rain; and in the sacrifices of Brahmadev the appropriate *mantras* will be fully found. 205. So also at Chāngdev’s feast the Giver of Eternal Life (i. e., Vishnu) Himself came; therefore there could be no one with his appetite unsatisfied; for the great *Siddhis** supplied all the food. 206. Brāhmans jokingly remarked, ‘She has served rice from a vessel turned upside down.’ For that reason and from that time that rice received the nickname *Bhātlavandyā* (= *bhāt* meaning ‘rice’; *lavandyā*, upsetter). 207. Not a single person remained in the city with his appetite unsatisfied and all praised Chāngdev: ‘Blessed are his novel deeds.’ 208. Though only a little was served, every one was satisfied; and through the kindness of Vitthal there was as much food left over as there was provided at first. 209. After saying this the Brāhmans repeated *mantras* and scattered rice in blessing, and Chāngdev put the child of promise forward and the rice was thrown upon him.

* See Appendix under *Siddhis*.

210. The Brāhmans were pleased by the *pāṇsupārī* and other gifts and when they went to the temple, behold ! the idol was visible there. 211. This made them exclaim, 'O God Supreme, the Husband of Rukminī, today we dined along with you ; for, seeing the loving *bhakti* of the widow, Thou, O Shripati (i. e., Krishna), didst go where she was.' 212. The Brāhmans having said this reverently prostrated themselves at the god's feet, saying, 'Chāṅgdev the noble Vaishnav has shown us a most remarkable miracle.' 213. The next day all the community of Brāhmans came to Chāṅgdev and appointed a day in the month of *Māgh* (February) for investing the the child of promise with the sacred thread. 214. According to the prescribed rites the Brāhmans then invested the boy; having taught him the *Gāyatrī Mantra** they made a great festival; 215. for four days Brāhmans were treated at feasts and gifts were made with generous minds and they returned words of blessing. 216. After taking leave of the god, Chāṅgdev at once started for the home of the son of promise. 217. The mother and son, along with Chāṅgdev, entered into their home at Kalyān Kalburgā with feelings of love. 218. The whole of her story was told to her relatives, close friends and connections, how Chāṅgdev had given this child of promise; and all were full of astonishment. 219. When the relatives and close friends heard of this affair they at once came to visit them, and noticing the characteristics of the child, all felt satisfied.

MARRIAGE OF THE BOON-SON

220. There was present a very distinguished citizen who made the proposal to Chāṅgdev that he should give his daughter to this son of blessing. 221. To this request of the citizen, Chāṅgdev agreed and the wealthy citizen

*See Appendix under these words.

made preparations on behalf of both parties for the wedding. 222. The marriage day was appointed and Brāhmans repeated the *mantra* of the holy ceremonial, '*Om punyūham*,' and amidst the loud playing of sweet instruments the marriage nuptials (i. e., joining of the hands of the bride and bridegroom) were celebrated. 223. Garments and adornments were given to the bride and bridegroom and for four days the occasion was celebrated according to established rites.

CHĀNGDEV STARTS FOR DWARKĀ

224. Chāngdev now said to them, 'I am going to Dwārkā,' and all the inhabitants of the holy city exclaimed, 'It will be difficult to see you again.' 225. The mother of young Vithobā joined her hands together and made a request to Chāngdev. After placing her son at his feet she asked him for this promise, namely, 226. 'Let his descendants have no other family deity aside from you, and let him who violates this become poor.' 227. In reply to her request the great *yogī* said, 'So be it. Let him not worship any other deity than Pāndurang.' 228. The descendants of Vithobā still go to Pandharī in the month of *Kārtik* (i. e., October or November), and there serve the Brāhmans from a dish turned upside down, thus carrying on the custom of their elders. 229. Taking leave of them all, Chāngdev started; men and women accompanied him for a distance, and all were moved with emotion. 230. After making their *namaskār* to the great *yogī* they all returned to their own homes and Chāngdev took with him his company of disciples and journeyed on.

231. This entire book of the *Bhaktalīlāmrit* is as it were a forest of tender *tulsi* plants, and it is here that God Supreme, the Husband of Rukminī, lovingly abides. 232. He who is Immovable and the Infinite, Shri Hari, who does wonders according to His will, He sits here

upon the tongue of Mahipati and gives him the power of memory.

233. *Svasti* (peace) ! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmṛtī*; merely listening to it supplies the longings of the heart, and God-loving pious *bhaktas* should listen to it. This is the seventh very delightful chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

LIFE OF CHĀNGDEV

(*Continued*)

CONFESSION OF SIN

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Victory, Victory to Thee, the Infinite One, Giver of blessings, *Guru* of the world, Ruler of Vaikunth (Vishnu's heaven), Brother of the lowly, Protector of the helpless, Giver of happiness, Shri Pandurang. 2. O Vithābāi, Thou hast saved innumerable dull-minded beings in the past, so now look upon me with concern, keeping me in Thy remembrance. 3. I am made up as it were into a statue from the assembling together of all sins. O Purifier of the sinner, Lover of Thy *bhaktas*, let this be known to Thee. 4. Entering into this present life, O Shri Hari, I have committed many kinds of sins; my mind bears witness to this; I am drowning in the ocean of this worldly existence. 5. I see no good accruing from present, past or future destiny, so with much love I plead for Thy mercy. 6. Through the distraction of various thoughts I am unable to restrain them, O Life of the World; in my waking state, in my sleep, and in my dreamless sleep I am unable to keep my mind steady. 7. O Shri Hari, only if Thou hast mercy upon me shall I be saved in the ocean of this present existence; all other means are useless. 8. Just as it happens when a kernel of grain is planted deep in the soil and the cloud does not rain upon it, so without Thy mercy all means are in vain. 9. Those whom Thou, O Husband of Rukmini, hast accepted because of the state of their minds, their fame has become world-wide and even the *Purāṇas* sing their praises. 10. Lotus-eyed One, cause me to remember in full detail the story of all those

saints, for I am dull of mind, unholy and merely Thy instrument.

A WOMAN'S HARD PILGRIMAGE

11. In the last chapter there was related how rice was served from a vessel turned upside down; then how Chāṅgdev set off after having celebrated the marriage of the son of promise. 12. His great longing was to go to Dwārkā, to bathe in the Gomatī river and then to see the image of Shri Krishna. 13. After the great *yogī* had said this a great body of pilgrims started for Dwārkā, and everywhere it was said that the value of the company of saints was indeed very great. 14. Now in the city of Dhārur there was a Brāhman Deshpāndya (officer) by name of Yādavpant who started to go on the pilgrimage with Chāṅgdev. 15. His wife, though in the family way, would not remain at home; she was urged by many to remain but she would listen to none; 16. she said, 'Shri Krishna will protect me while I am with Chāṅgdev.' With this determination in their mind, both husband and wife started. 17. One raised a doubt, 'Her husband is god-crazy and it is not easy to know what sort of country it is. 18. It does not look well for her, for she is yet a delicate child and is pregnant for the first time and the road to Dwārkā is a long one.' 19. One remarked, 'She has been in the family way now for over six months, and she is not strong enough to walk that distance.' 20. Some of her relations said, 'Let us go and bring her back'; and so they ran after her. 21. They attempted in many ways to induce her to return, but her mind was fully made up, saying, 'Let the Dark-complexioned One (Krishna) do whatever he wishes. 22. To begin with, my husband is god-crazy, and if I should remain at home and he should suddenly become a *Sannyāsī*, what will happen to me? 23. The life of a Brāhman woman is

difficult. (If my husband becomes a *Sannyāsi*) how shall I be able to carry on my domestic affairs ?' After listening to her thoughts the elderly relatives paid respect to her wishes. 24. Yādav Rao, her husband, hastened along with Chāṅgdev, and his wife walking all the way slowly followed. 25. Some thin and decrepit old women also followed behind, and among these the wife of Yādav walked along. 26. After the setting of the sun the pilgrims would encamp, and the women walking slowly would reach that place three hours after nightfall. 27. When she went to her husband he said to her, ' Why is it you have come ? We do not want to be hindered. Go back at once.' 28. When the good-natured woman was so roughly treated by her husband she began to weep and the other pilgrims said to her, ' Do not leave him.' 29. Yādav lovingly went as a suppliant to Chāṅgdev, and receiving his blessing he obtained peace of mind. 30. He became convinced that the events of this life were illusory; the Brahm-shadow came upon him and he lost bodily consciousness. 31. In his sleep and in his wakeful condition he saw everything as Chāṅgdev his *sadguru*; in his dreams and in his dreamless sleep this was his natural condition. 32. Such then became the condition of Yādav; all illusions regarding this worldly life disappeared from him, and he lost all concern for his wife whether she arrived or not. 33. The whole universe, the movables and immovables and all creatures, seemed to him but one in substance, and he himself was of the same essence, with no further thought of duality. 34. He walked along the road to Dwārkā, singing and dancing full of love, and his wife though in the family way followed slowly on foot. 35. When nine months were completed with no mother or sister near, she reached the Mahī river, where there was a wild jungle. 36. The great *yogī* Chāṅgdev with his company of disciples had gone much farther on

and Yādav went with him, not even looking back for his wife. 37. She was now altogether alone and it looked as though her good fortune had deserted her in this wild jungle. Her pangs came upon her and she could not move. 38. So she cried out, 'My mother and father are far from here, and my husband has deserted me and gone away; this is a sad thing for me. What shall I do, O Shri Hari.' 39. She was now in very great pain, and the pilgrims had gone far ahead; not a single person was there and it looked very bad for her.

YĀDAV'S WIFE CALLS FOR HELP

40. In her deep distress she cried to Chāṅgdev for help, saying, 'You, my *saḍguru*, have well become an *avatār*. Give me some relief. 41. For fourteen hundred years you conquered that fierce enemy death. You gave to a widow a child of promise and I have heard about all those deeds of fame. 42. For that reason I have come along with you to go to Dwārkā, but my husband has lost all sense of bodily consciousness, and has deserted me here in this jungle. 43. I am a forlorn and ignorant child; I have no experience of child-birth, and neither mother nor sister is near me, so I am in great trouble. 44. O Lover of Thy *bhaktas*, Giver of eternal life, come to my help this day.' Thus did this woman in distress call to God for help and her words fell upon His ear. 45. The Brother of the helpless, the compassionate One, the Lover of His *bhaktas*, the Ocean of mercy has often become an *avatār* in order to protect His *bhaktas*. 46. He became a fish, a tortoise, a wild boar, half man and half lion, Vāman, Parashurām, and the *avatārs* Shri Rām, the son of Dashrath, and Krishna, Buddha and *Kalki*. 47. He took the part of one and moved a wall, and made a stone statue eat and for the sake of another Shripati became a low-caste messenger. 48. In the house of one (Eknāth) under the name of Shrikhandyā,

Krishna gladly provided the water for the saints; and without any hesitation he completed the grinding for the little slave girl Jani. 49. The Husband of Rukmini himself helped Chokhāmēlā to draw the oxen; and when as punishment the cowherdess fastened Him to the churn handle the holder of the Shārang Bow (i. e., Krishna) endured it. 50. For the sake of saving his *bhakta*, the Lord of the Universe became a barber, and whenever His saints fell into any great distress He immediately appeared. 51. Taking no notice of time or season, the Merciful to the lowly became visible in His qualities; and He heard this cry from the woman in childbirth.

KRISHNA AS NURSE TO A WOMAN IN NEED

52. The Life of the world became impatient and His mind could not wait. The king of the Yādavas was moved with compassion and He showed a miracle. 53. The Recliner on the Serpent appeared where the wife of Yādav was; the Soul of the world assumed the form of a woman. 54. Vanamālī (i. e., Krishna) came dressed in a white thin sārī and a pure white jacket; with earrings flashing brightly and the *kunkū* mark on the forehead. 55. He who dwells in Vaikunth, the Husband of Indirā, he whom the Holder of the Pināk Bow (i. e., Shiva) holds close to his heart, had his whole arm covered with bracelets and I wondered at it. 56. The woman was astonished to see the form, of a midwife and she exclaimed, 'Where did you come from, my dear friend? Tell me.' 57. Thus addressed, the Recliner upon the Serpent replied, 'Chāṅgdev has sent me here, and my name is Krishnābāī. 58. Your time of delivery has come, and therefore I have hastened here. Have no fear in your mind; I will make all arrangements for you.' 59. In speaking thus, the Husband of Rukminī by means

of His use of Māyā created a city out of Māyā. 60. She (Krishnābāi) then took the suffering woman by the hand and took her into a house, saying, 'Do not be shy, tell me whatever may be in your mind. 61. You are alone here in this foreign country; you have no mother or sister near you; and knowing that the time of your delivery had come I have come rushing to your help.' 62. Krishnābāi having thus spoken the woman felt a sense of peace and exclaimed, 'I should have something to repay you for your kindness, but I have nothing whatever with me.' 63. With these words she placed her head at Krishnābāi's feet, and just then the pains of child-birth came upon her and she bore a beautiful son with good palmistic signs. 64. The Dark-complexioned One was well pleased and therefore with His own hand he sounded the gong for joy; in supplying the needs of his servants, Gopāl (Krishna) showed no laziness. 65. He whose image is in the chamber of the heart of His worshipper, Shiva, with His own hand cut the navel cord and with great joy. 66. The woman just delivered said to Krishnābāi, 'Why are you working so hard all alone? Why have you not employed another midwife?' 67. To this she replied, 'I am very pleased to see that your two lives (mother and babe) have been separated; I am not weary of my labours; I say this truly' 68. Then He from whose toes the holy Ganges river springs, He, the Life of the world, heated water to bathe the babe and its mother. 69. Krishnābāi in her love distributed *kāl* and *bol* from house to house and the Soul of the world prepared fragrant paste and various remedies and gave to her. 70. Krishnābāi supplied her with a braiser and a bedstead, and preparing some very light food she gave it to the woman. 71. The Husband of Rukminī prepared the *pāṇsupārī* with his own hand and gave to her; He had a light burning at her side all night and kept watch

by the side of her bed. 72. He whom all the gods, including Indra, continually worship, He performed with His own hand the worship of *Satvī* (delivery deities), and Himself gathered all the materials for worship. 73. On the slab of stone He Himself placed *nādāpudī*, *shendūr* (red lead) and incense and many kinds of flowers, and also a special dish called *murudkūnavlā*.

KRISHNA AS MIDWIFE

74. Performing the special worship of the fifth day Krishnābāi remained awake all night and on the tenth day Shripati [who was in the form of Krishnābāi] bathed her with His own hands. 75. Thus the Life of the world stayed with her in her child-birth for one month, wearying not in His labours, this merciful Shri Krishna. 76. Whatever this woman needed at the time Chakrapāni (i. e., Krishna) supplied it all, and preparing medicine and proper diet in love Krishnābāi would place them before her. 77. Yādav had gone on in the company of Chāngdev, neglecting his wife; so the merciful Shrirang (i. e., Husband of Lakshmi, who was Krishna) cared for her. 78. At this time no one knew of this affair, for the miraculous deeds of Shri Hari are not known even to Brahmadev or the other gods. 79. After a month had passed Chāngdev had arrived at the city of Dwarkā, and having bathed in the Gomati river he went into the temple. 80. Full of love he made a prostrate bow at the great door of the temple and then brought to his mind the image of Shri Krishna together with Rukmini. 81. To his great astonishment he could not see in the image the Holder of the Hand of Shri (Husband of Lakshmi, i. e., Krishna) and he felt astounded. The great *yogī* looking about everywhere in the universe suddenly saw a most wonderful sight. 82. He saw the wife of Yādav left behind far away on the banks of the Mahi river and at the time of

her delivery he saw the Husband of Indirā (i. e., Krishna) hastening to her side. 83. There he saw him in the form of Krishnābāi performing the office of a midwife; such was the vision in detail which Chāṅgdev saw. 84. Rukminī then said to Keshavdās (i. e., Chāṅgdev), 'You have given much trouble to the Lord of Dwārakā. How is it that you have sent him to act as a midwife? You have disappointed us. 85. A whole month has passed and the Recliner on the Serpent has not returned, for he has assumed the form of Krishnābāi, and we are all in trouble. 86. Besides myself the eight *Siddhīs* as His servants are with Him night and day, and had *Hrishīkeshī* (the Lord of the heart, i. e., Krishna) given the command, they would have performed this very great deed. 87. That such a glorious Being should be acting personally as a midwife is an action bemeaning to God; I do not like it.' 88. To Rukminī who had just said this Keshavdās (i. e., Chāṅgdev) replied, 'It is His characteristic that he wishes to carry out personally the things His *bhaktas* desire. 89. O mother, do you not know the events that have happened before, how the Recliner on the Serpent, in the house of Dharma removed the leaf-plates on which the Brāhmanas had dined? 90. The Yadav army of fifty-six crores stood around to serve him, yet with His own hand he washed the horses of Arjun; such are His praiseworthy deeds. 91. The great *Rishis* reverently worship Him and make Him an offering but He will not accept it, and yet this same Shri Krishna because of His love ate the food of the cowherds in the same plates. 92. He who never appeared in visible form to the *yogīs* with their strenuous austerities, nor to those having the knowledge of Brahman; He was bound with a rope by the milkmaids; this seems to me a very wonderful fact. 93. Although the eight *Siddhīs* (accomplishments) are near Him ready for service, yet He did not

assign them any duty, but Himself ground the grain for Janī. This He did because He was attracted by the love of His *bhaktas*. 94. For that same reason the Life of the world is performing the duties of a midwife, which is only characteristic of Him. What could be done to prevent Him? 95. Hearing Chāṅgdev say this, Rukmini felt amazed and said, 'Think out some plan and bring the Lord of Vaikunth back. 96. Go back at once to the Mahī river and bring back Shri Hari. He is there in the form of Krishnābāi.' 97. Hearing Rukmini's words Chāṅgdev replied, 'I will go.' Then making a *namaskār* to the Mother of the universe he at once set off.

CHĀṆGDEV LEARNS THE WOMAN'S STORY

98. The great *yogī* (Chāṅgdev) reached Brahmāranya (i. e., the jungle by name Brahm) near the banks of the Mahī river, and there the city which had been made out of *Māyā* appeared to his sight. 99. Chāṅgdev was astonished and said, 'This is Shri Hari's miraculous deed. He places before our sight wonderful events when He sees the intensity of our love.' 100. He asked the people of the city where Krishnābāi was living; so they pointed out the house from a distance and he went into it. 101. Krishnābāi was just then in the front yard and on seeing Chāṅgdev made a *namaskār* to him, but Shri Bhagwant who through *Māyā* performs miracles would not allow Himself to be recognized. 102. Although Chāṅgdev was such a great *yogī* and had conquered death for fourteen hundred years, still even he did not understand Shri Hari's voluntary deeds; then how can the common mind understand? 103. Taking on many forms, God often appears on the earth, but *Māyā* veils the eye so that Shripati (i. e., Krishna) is not seen. 104. Why talk of the lives of others? He was born from Yashodā's

womb, and although He showed her the whole of the universe in His mouth, still she called Shri Hari her child. 105. Although Chāṅgdev saw Krishnābāi, a question arose in his mind as to who she was ; so he did not make her a *namaskār* in return. 106. Shri Krishna the performer of miracles through *Māyā* at once disappeared, and as Chāṅgdev went further into the house the woman who bore the child arose and came to him. 107. She placed her babe with her own hands at the feet of the great *yogī*, and told him from beginning to end what had happened to her. 108. She said, 'My husband deserted me in this jungle and I had to remain here alone ; when the time came for my delivery I was sitting here deserted by Fate. 109. Then you, my *Swāmī*, took pity on me and sent Krishnābāi here to perform the duties of a midwife and she cared for me here'. 110. When Chāṅgdev said to her, 'Show me Krishnābāi', the woman replied, 'She has just now gone outside. 111. When you came into the house she was standing outside.' Then Chāṅgdev said to himself, 'I have given great trouble to Shripati (i. e., Krishna). 112. If we had not brought Yādav along with us, then Shri Hari would not have had to perform the office of a midwife.' His mind full of that thought he exclaimed, 'I gave great trouble to the Lord of Dwārkā. 113. For the purpose of whose attainment sacrifices, offerings, austerities and religious rites are performed, He, the Lord of Vaikunth, never thinks of His greatness when anything has to be done for His *bhaktas*.' 114. The woman having placed the babe at his feet, she exclaimed, 'The child is your disciple ; let him always be at your service.' 115. Hearing what the woman said the *sadguru* replied, 'So shall it be.'

CHĀNGDEV REUNITES YĀDAV & HIS WIFE

Then taking the mother and her infant child he returned to Dwārkā; 116. and when he went into the

temple he saw there the image of Shri Krishna, so he exclaimed, 'O God Supreme, Husband of Rukmini, Thou art the performer of wonderful deeds. 117. Thou didst take the form of a woman and didst perform the office of a midwife. The epithets, Brother of the helpless, Cloud of mercy, are appropriate to Thee.' 118. Thus praising God and worshipping the image of Shri Krishna and lighting the platter of lights he lovingly made a prostrate *namaskār*. 119. He then called Yādav to him and had him meet his wife and son, saying to him, 'Do not desert her; I will give you a blessing. 120. In the line of your descendants one after the other, there will be distinguished *bhaktas* of Hari; by them the whole family line will be saved; there will be no exception.' 121. The *sadguru* having said this, Yādav lovingly made a *namaskār* to him, and taking his wife by the hand he then led her to his lodging. 122. Chāngdev had a feast of dainty food prepared, and gave a dinner to the assembled Vaishnavs; remaining there for four months, he was then ready to start for his own country. 123. Taking leave of the god, Chāngdev with all his followers and assembly of pilgrims arrived at the banks of the Godāvari. 124. Coming to the holy city of *Punyastambha* (Puntāmbā) he met there all his dear friends and then occurred a very wonderful thing of which every one heard.

DISASTER AT PANDHARPUR : THE KRISHNA IDOL
HIDDEN IN A CELLAR

125. After Chāngdev had been to Dwārkā his fame spread all over the country and people exclaimed, 'He has been born as an *avatār* in this world to save the universe. 126. Whatever is associated with the sun sends out its illumination through the whole heaven; even as when the *champak* flower is far away, its fragrance comes to the nostrils. 127. When the moon arises the cool wind comes rushing into the sky; even as before Shri Rāma

had entered the womb of Kausalyā, his deeds became known everywhere. 128. Similarly the fame of the *bhaktas* of God is universally spoken of. Blessed is the great *yogī*, Chāṅgdev; the Husband of Rukminī is his helper. ' 129. Seven days after Chāṅgdev had arrived at the banks of the Godāvārī, messengers from Pandharī informed him of unhappy events in that city. 130. The king of Bedar, an evil-minded Muhammadan, had come to the city and had given great trouble to the Brāhmins creating havoc among them. 131. He had forbidden the observance of the Hindu religion, refusing to allow the Vaishnavs to wear their rosaries, stopping all *kīrtans* and recitation of the deeds of God, and even inflicting punishment on good-natured Brāhmins. 132. He had looted the sacred city of Pandharī and had made the place one of his Muhammadan stations. The *Badcās* (or idol attendants) had made a written agreement and the image of Vithobā had been hidden. 133. The image of Pāndurang had been covered over in a cellar, and no one now spoke of him; if any Vaishnavs did perform a *kīrtan* they were at once punished. 134. The wicked person had demolished the great temple and had turned it into a mosque. Persons well off had fled away from the city when they realized the power of the Muslims. 135. For seven months these things went on, and when Chāṅgdev heard the account tears flowed from his eyes. 136. His very hair stood on end, his throat choked with emotion, and he exclaimed, 'Out of fear of the *Kali Yuga* the Husband of Rukminī has chosen to stay in a cellar. 137. Yet had He not given a promise to Pundlik, that He would save the dull-minded, merely by looking at Him? It now looks as though he had cast aside that promise.' 138. Then Chāṅgdev prayed, 'O merciful One, all-powerful, courageous, and awe-inspiring One, O Husband of Rukminī, I remember Thy praiseworthy

deeds to which my mind witnesses. 139. When Shankh the demon overcame Shiva, Brahmdeva, Indra and the other gods, then Thou didst take the form of a fish, and in a moment's time didst destroy him. 140. Assuming the form of a tortoise Thou didst hold mount Mandār on Thy back; and taking out at once the jewels Thou didst please all the gods. 141. When the demon Hiranyāksha was ruining the world Thou didst immediately take the form of a wild boar, and didst immediately kill the *daitya* (demon); these wonderful praiseworthy deeds are recorded in the *Purāṇs*. 142. When Hiranyakashyapu began to trouble Thy *bhakta* Pralhād Thou didst appear out of the pillar; and didst tear him with Thy paws to protect Thy servant. 143. (King) Bali became proud of his own munificence given him and Thou didst cast him down to the lower regions. Although Thou art so powerful, O Vanamālī (i. e., Krishna), at this time Thy power is obscured. 144. When Sahasrārjun troubled Renukā Thou didst take an axe in Thy hand and clearing the world of all Kshatriyas Thou didst establish the Brāhmins in Thy kingdom. 145. The deceitful Ravan had imprisoned all the gods, and then Thou didst become an *avatār* in the form of Raghuvir (i. e., Rāma) and didst kill the ten-headed demon. 146. Then as Shri Hari Thou wast born to Vasudev and Devakī as an *avatār* and destroying the enemies Kans and Chānur Thou didst bring happiness to the world. 147. Although such is Thy power, now that it has all vanished who is there to protect us? There is no one on the whole round earth.' 148. Such was Chāngdev's pleading at that time when he called on God for help; he exclaimed, 'O God Supreme, Giver of eternal life, come quickly and meet with me.' 149. In describing Thy might the king of the serpent race wearied himself and yet Thou hast given this honour to the Evil One (death) of

the *Kali Yuga*, and from fear of the Muhammadan Thou hast hidden thyself.' 150. Hearing Chāṅgdev's moving words the Husband of Rukminī felt His heart melt, and appearing in His true form to Chāṅgdev He gave him his assurance, 151. saying, 'God-loving *bhakta*, listen to my words. I am the Motionless, the Unchanging and the Imperishable One; but in order to fulfill your wish I have taken this manifest form with qualities. 152. By my wish innumerable creatures appear and disappear; so what are these poor miserable Muhammadans? Why are you anxious about it? 153. In the *Kṛita*, *Tretā* and *Dvāpār Yugas* I did many heroic deeds, and in this *Kali Yuga* I have placed all my powers of victory at the disposal of my *bhaktas*. 154. If you will start out on a very difficult proposal I will cause it immediately to be accomplished; I, the Lord of the world, am the helper, so do not be troubled. 155. Leaving the banks of the Godāvarī, go quickly to the city of Bedar, where a miraculous event will take place which every one there will see.' 156. The Husband of Rukminī having said this He remained in the heart of Keshavdās (i. e., Chāṅgdev), and when he opened his eyes he felt deep astonishment.

CHĀNGDEV GOES TO BEDAR

157. Chāṅgdev exclaimed, 'In order to carry out my wish Pāṇdurang has met me in visible form, and now he (Shripati, i. e., Krishna) has commanded me to go to Bedar. 158. If the Dark-complexioned One is the protector what can that wicked Muhammadan do? What can the God of Death do when the merciful One to the lowly is your Helper?' 159. While Shri Hari is overcoming *Dāityas* and *Dānavas* (two classes of demons), you should be conquering the six enemies of the soul;* and by rendering the city of Yama (hell) vacant you should be

* These are lust, anger, covetousness, affection, pride, and envy.

founding the city of heaven (literally Vaikunth). 160. After killing Rāvan and Kumbhakarn, Raghunadan (i. e., Rāma) became completely victorious; while the saints bravely conquered lust and anger. 161. While Krishna killed Kans and Chānūr, the saints vanquished pride and envy, and by this triumph these victorious Vishnu-*bhaktas* have gained great fame. 162. Having killed Vakradant and Shishupal, Krishna became victorious. and by destroying hypocrisy and conceit the saints adorned themselves with peace. 163. Shri Rāma killed Tātikā (a demoness), while His saints destroyed the goddess of Insult when it was giving them trouble; thus both sets of deeds were identical without there being any noticeable difference. 164. All these illustrations are sufficient to show how God and his *bhaktas* are the same and how in love they experience one another's sorrow and joy. 165. Just as the body and the occupant of the body live together and are of the same essence; just as the sun and light are not different in any way; 166. just as with the ear and the power of listening, and as with the eye and the power of sight, so God and His *bhaktas*, though differing in outer form, are really one; 167. like the nose and fragrance, the tongue and taste, so God is not different from His *bhaktas*; both are alike. 168. Hence it was that Chāngdev and the Husband of Rukmini understood one another's thoughts, and to save the dull-minded they became *avatārs* upon the earth. 169. In the next chapter will be found the delightful story of how God carried out the wish of His *bhakta*. Mahīpati will describe the stories of the lives of the saints in easily understood verses. 170. *Svasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Bhakta-līlāmrit*. By merely listening to it the desires of the heart are fulfilled. Let the pious God-loving *bhaktas* listen. This is the eighth delightful chapter. It is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER IX

CHĀNGDEV AND A MUSLIM KING

GOD FULFILLS THE DESIRES OF HIS *BHAKTAS*

1. Obeisance to Shri Rādhā Krishna. Victory, victory to the *Guru* of the world, the Lord of Pandharī. Thou alone art the Ruler of all things, animate and inanimate, and Thou providest everything that they need. 2. When one sits under a wish-tree, without delay the desires of the mind seem to be realized. 3. When a person gaily dressed turns his face to a mirror, he sees there its exact reflection, of that he has no doubt. 4. When one shouts from the top of a mountain into the ravines and valleys, the same sound comes back to him; also in a temple built of stone the echoing sound returns. 5. So, oh Cloud of mercy, according to what one desires of Thee, Thou dost bring it to full fruition, oh Life of the world; and Thou dost give salvation to the lowly-minded. 6. Since those who are not Thy *bhaktas* have no feelings of devotion for Thee, O Shripati (i. e., Krishna), Thou dost not show Thyself to them; but seeing the need of Thy pious *bhaktas* Thou dost meet these in Thy visible form. 7. In order to take the part of Thy *bhaktas* Thou hast assumed different *avatārs*; in killing fierce demons and evil spirits Thou hast manifested wonderful deeds. 8. And now, oh *Hrīshīkeshi* (i. e., Lord of the heart), although Thou hast assumed the form of Buddha, and although Thou dost never speak to anyone in words, yet Thou dost give success to Thy *bhaktas* and dost increase the greatness of their good deeds.

CHĀNGDEV ON HIS WAY TO BEDAR

9. In the last chapter there was the story of deep meaning in which Shri Krishna became Krishnābāi, and

how in her love she acted as a midwife to a woman who was on pilgrimage. 10. Chāṅgdev having seen this with his own eyes was much astonished, and therefore he brought about a meeting between husband and wife and then returned. 11. On arriving back at *Puṇyastambha* (Puntām-bā) he heard the bad news of what was going on at Pandhari, namely, that the Muhammadan king (of Bedar) had come to the city and had robbed the Brāhmins of their all; 12. and of how the attendants of the god had hidden the idol of Shri Pāndurang, and the evil-minded Muhammadan had changed the temple into a mosque. 13. We told how Chāṅgdev had been overcome with emotion on hearing the news and had exclaimed, 'Although I have come here to this world of mortals, and have done nothing worthy of praise; 14. I must rebuild the temple which the Muhammadan has demolished.' With this intense desire in his heart he said to himself, 'I must hasten to go there (to Bedar).' 15. Thus 'thinking to himself he assembled all his disciples and said that they should go with him to Bedar and see what could be done. 16. After these instructions, all his followers made ready, and some of the public officials also went along with him. 17. Taking with them banners bearing the design of eagles, and victorious relics and gorgeous flags, the cymbal and the small drum made the sound of the music fill the air. 18. The Vaishnavs shouting aloud the name of Vitthal continued praising Him; the sound of it all was tremendous and their joy had no limit. 19. Shouting 'Victory! Victory!' and clapping their hands, all the assembly of *bhaktas* showed their joy when Chāṅgdev started with them; it was a joyful procession of Vaishnavs. 20. As they journeyed along the roads they praised God in their burst of joy; from town to town the people heard of their approach and thought their salvation had arrived. 21. Every one was aware that

Chāṅgdev was a perfect *yogī*, and when they heard that he was near the town the people would rush out to welcome him. 22. Reverencing and worshipping him in many ways, various materials for cooking were offered him and whatever those in the procession desired, the means of carrying it out were provided; 23. just as the Ganges river flowing towards the sea saves the people of the towns through which it flows, for as they drink of it, bathe in it and make offerings, they are saved without special effort.

ENCOURAGEMENTS ON THE ROAD TO BEDAR

24. In order to teach a lesson to the Muhammadan, the Vaishnav *bhakta* journeyed on to Bedar; people along the road came to see him, and those who came received the enjoyment of heaven and final deliverance. 25. Any sacred town founded by a saint should be called *Vaikunth* (or heaven) and even its stones and pebbles should be called gods. 26. And now Mahipati requests his listeners to hear with reverence the story that follows. In whatever town the saints live, that town becomes widely known in all the three worlds. 27. For example, if Pundlik had not been born in the sacred district of Lohadanda, who would have called Pandharī Vishnu's heaven? Consider that thought. 28. Alankāpur (i. e., Ālandī) was a miserable little village before Shri Dnyāndev became an *avatār* there, and now during the month of *Kārtik* (October or November) great pilgrimages gather there. 29. Because Chāṅgdev lived for a time at *Punyastambha* (Puntāmbā) on the banks of the Godāvarī, a great gathering takes place there on the eleventh day of *Āshādh* (June or July). 30. The village of Dehū looks very small but it was there that Tukārām became an *avatār*; hence Vaishnavs go there every fifteen days (for the *Ekādoshī* festival) in praise of Hari. 31. Bodhalā the Vaishnav farmer descended

as an *avatār* upon this earth and he turned the village of Dhāmangaon into a second Pandhari ; this fact is known everywhere. 32. Because of such facts, all the towns where the saints have lived have been given the name of heaven (lit., Vaikunth) ; this is the experience of all who are pious, but others do not understand it. 33. In this *Kali Yuga* all the sacred bathing places, being afraid of the sins of men, have moved to towns where Vaishnavs lived. 34. Wherever there is the water of a river, of a rivulet, or of a well, or that of a pool or tank, in the place where saints live, all the sacred bathing places have resorted thither. 35. Hindrances do not come where the saints are ; but should they come they quickly depart ; for Shri Hari with the disk in his hand is the protector of that place. 36. With the greatness of the saints nothing can be compared ; for how can one make a comparison with that which is beyond all comparison ? By their loving *bhakti* they make Purushottam (i. e., Vishnu) subject to them. 37. When His *bhaktas* fall into any trouble, then God, to whom no attributes can be ascribed, becomes one with attributes and immediately removes all their troubles, and thus protects His servants from all harmful hindrances. 38. For God and His *bhaktas* are one in heart, and in their own feeling they regard one another as of one essence ; and it was because God desired it that Chāngdev was now on his way to Bedar. 39. Hearing of the praiseworthy deeds of Chāngdev, the people along the way came out to see him, lovingly bowed to him, and with reverence offered him their worship. 40. Pleased at heart they provided him with materials for cooking, and then they listened to his *kīrtans* ; he turned every one to *bhakti* and even the evil-minded became humble. 41. Whatever desire anyone had in his heart was fulfilled and as he journeyed along the news of him widely spread.

THE CHIEF OF THE JANGAMS HUMBLLED

42. On his march he came to a town where the chief of all the *Jangams** made his permanent abode. 43. By learning many mystic *mantras* the chief was an expert in the art of deception, and in that connection his *guru* had given him a magic carpet. 44. When any good person came to his house he was accustomed to give him this mat to sit upon, and the mat would suddenly turn over and the sitter would sprawl on the floor. 45. Then he and his disciples would burst out laughing, and he played these pranks on many, but finally the moon-headed God (i. e., Shiva) became angry. 46. In the same way, through a boon promised by Shiva, Rāvan became intoxicated by pride, and through that pride he carried away Sitā; but assuming the form of Māruti, the Sporter in *Kaulās* (i. e., Shiva) destroyed the ten-headed demon (Rāvan). 47. This *Jangam* Mallikārjuna was the worshipper of Shiva, and with all his mystic powers he gave great trouble to saints and *sādhūs*. 48. Chāngdev knew this and so he came there on his journey, saying to himself that Shri Vishvambhar (i. e., the Pervader of the Universe) would humble the chief's pride. 49. Some people hearing of the praise given to Chāngdev came and told these *Jangams*, declaring, 'This servant of Vishnu having attained the nectar of immortal life is wandering about. 50. Taking with him a great company of disciples he is hastening to the city of Bedar.' When the chief *Jangam* heard this he became full of rage; 51. just as a thief gets full of rage when the moon rises; or just as Duryodhan† devised a deceitful action when he heard repeatedly of the good deeds of Dharma; 52. so this evil-minded man became angry when he heard of

* See Appendix under *Jangam*.

† See *Stories of Indian Saints* II, p. 400 (Vol. X in this series).

Chāṅgdev's praiseworthy deeds. In his home he had a dog and he now changed its name, giving it the name of Chāṅgdev. 53. That this evil-minded man had called his dog by that name was fully understood by the great *yogī* before he came to the *Jangam's* hermitage. 54. With cymbal, drum and *vīṇā* and their sweet music, the musicians who had their banners accompanied the noble Vaishnav as he performed his *kīrtans*, and the sound filled the air. 55. When the *Ayyā* (i. e., the chief *Jangam*) heard the noise he was filled with rage; just as when the repeating of Vishnu's name falls upon the ears of ghosts they tremble with fear. 56. A juggler does not possess much skill, but he keeps up his reputation of mystic powers; just as a scorpion may have very little poison in its tail, but it holds its sting erect on its shoulder; 57. so this *Jangam* had become very vain over the power of his mystic *mantras*; therefore when Chāṅgdev came near him, the rascal would not make Chāṅgdev a *namaskār*. 58. The Vaishnavs knew that one should humiliate a wicked man by means of a good action, so Chāṅgdev in a suppliant manner said to this chief of the *Jangams*, ' All pride should be put away.' 59. Yet although that evil-doer understood this, still he himself gave the magic mat to Chāṅgdev to sit upon, and in doing so said, 'Please be seated.' 60. Chāṅgdev quite understood how this *Jangam* had humiliated many by giving them this mat to sit upon and had then sent them sprawling on the floor. 61. 'I call myself the *bhakta* of Pāṇdurang,' said Chāṅgdev to himself. 'The evil ruler *Kali* is entirely subservient to me and I will show this man some miracle and remove his conceit.' 62. Having so decided in his mind he blew some ashes on the mat and suddenly it rose in flames. 63. When the *Jangam* saw this, he at once prostrated himself on the ground before Chāṅgdev, saying, 'It is through the magic power of this mat that I have enjoyed the reputation of

greatness ; 64. now if it burns up, how am I to earn my livelihood ? ’

THE *JANGAM* CHIEF A SUPPLIANT TO CHĀNGDEV

Making a *namaskār* to Chāngdev, the *Jangam* said to him very humbly, 65. ‘ This magic mat was given me as a favour by my *guru*, and I have possessed it through my good fortune ; do not let it be completely burnt up. ’ Saying this he grasped Chāngdev by the feet. 66. As a live coal appears red in the darkness, but when the rays of the sun fall upon it, it looks like charcoal ; 67. likewise in the pride of his mystic powers this Mallikārjuna (i. e., the *guru* of the *Jangams*) had become envious, but when he saw the power of Chāngdev he became humble. 68. Grasping the great *yogi*’s feet he said, ‘ Do not burn up my mat entirely. ’ Hearing this pleading, Chāngdev performed another miracle. 69. Again blowing some ashes he brought back the mat, and the fire was immediately put out ; such were his incomparably strange powers. 70. The *Jangam* said to the great *yogi*, ‘ Remain here and make my abode holy ; do your cooking in my hermitage and eat here. ’ 71. Keeping in mind what he had yet to accomplish, the *bhakta* of Vishnu replied, ‘ I will do so ’ ; and the *Jangam* told his own disciples to provide the materials for cooking. 72. The dog to which he had given the name of Chāngdev, and which answered to this call, he told his disciples to hide away in the cellar. 73. He said to himself, ‘ If he knows what I have done he will perform some other miracle to my disadvantage ’ ; so with this fear in his heart he had the dog hidden away. 74. Chāngdev then said to the *Ayyā* (or chief *Jangam*), ‘ You also ought to prepare your food and sit with us to eat. ’ To this Mallikārjuna (the *guru* of the *Jangams*) replied he would do so. 75. As soon as the cooking on both sides was finished Chāngdev made the divine offerings to fire and the gods and then all the

plates were served. 76. Five hundred of these *Jangam* Lingāyats ^{*}(the worshippers of Shiva) were accustomed to come to the *Ayyā's* (the priest's) feast, and with Chāṅgdev there were also about a thousand pilgrims. 77. When cooking was finished all these lovingly sat down together in line, and in order that other creatures might partake of the food he put some aside for beasts and birds.

CHĀṆGDEV'S MIRACLE WITH A DOG

78. Chāṅgdev then said to the *Ayyā* (the chief *Jangam*), ' I have made the divine offerings to fire and the gods; now you undo the emblem of Shiva in the cloth around your neck and begin your worship. ' 79. Saying they would do so, the Lingāyats undid their cloths and not one of them had the emblem in it; this filled them with astonishment. 80. Then the *Jangams* went to their *guru* Mallikārjuna and told him of the affair, saying, ' The Lord of *Kailās* (Shiva) is angry with us and has run away from us. 81. Five hundred of us are seated at the feast but not one possesses the *linga* (or emblem); this is a most extraordinary affair; ' so they said to their great *guru*. 82. The (*guru*) Mallikārjuna replied, ' If Shiva has gone away, why do you keep yourselves alive ? If you have any trust in the scriptures, all of you should commit suicide. ' 83. The disciples said to their *guru*, ' You are giving us the teachings of the scriptures ; but you look and see whether that emblem is in your own neck-cloth ; and do not prattle vainly to us ; 84. for he who teaches others the divine knowledge and yet himself walks in the wrong way loses a blessing both in this life and in the life to come, and suffers hell to the full. ' 85. Then the chief *Jangam* undid the cloth around his neck and the *linga* (i. e., the Shiva emblem) was not there. Feeling therefore extremely ashamed he made the request to Chāṅgdev, 86. ' I ask

* See Appendix under *Lingāyat*.

you and all your followers to begin your meal; for the Husband of Pārvatī (Shiva) is evidently angry with us and has gone to his *Kailās* (heaven).’

87. The great *yogi* hearing this said, ‘Some omission of duty apparently has taken place and you should not allow any living creature in this hermitage to remain hungry. 88. You had a dog called Chāngyā which continually ate at your door here, and you have hidden him down in the cellar; therefore Shiva is angry. 89. The whole earth is in the form of a *linga* (i. e., a Shiva emblem) but while the whole universe seems to be in the form of Shiva, you have hidden your dog away; please tell me the reason for doing so. 90. Your dog Chāngyā is a great thief, and he is the one that has swallowed all the emblems of Shiva; so bring him outside.’ This was the reply Chāngdev gave. 91. Hearing what Chāngdev said, the Lingāyat (i. e., *Jangam*) was full of astonishment and exclaimed, ‘This Vaishnav *Muni* is one who understands the inner thoughts; in him Chakrapāni (i. e., Krishna) himself has descended as an *avatār*.’ 92. The dog was then brought out of the cellar and Keshavdās (i. e., Chāngdev) came and said to it, 93. ‘This chief *Jangam* and his disciples are without their emblems. Chāngyā! you have swallowed them; give them up immediately.’ 94. The moment these words were heard a most extraordinary thing happened; for the dog opened its mouth and vomitted all the emblems. 95. When the Lingāyats (i. e., *Jangams*) saw this most remarkable performance they were all ashamed, and each recognizing his own particular emblem, they made their *namaskār* to Chāngdev, 96. exclaiming, ‘You are indeed the *avatār* of Vishnu. You have reprovved our pride; for the dog first swallowed and then vomitted the emblems; in bringing this about you have shown us a great miracle.’ 97. After praising Chāngdev in this way the *Jangams* worshipped Shiva,

and the food already served on their leaf plates they offered to the god. 98. Bringing to mind the form of Pāndurang, Chāṅgdev also made his offering in the words, 'The Pervader of the Universe, the Lord of Vaikunth, is the enjoyer of this meal, through this offering.' 99. Whatever anyone liked was served on his plate, and the animals, birds and ants were also served with the food. 100. Both parties sat down in the same line and the whole company had their appetites satisfied.

CHĀNGDEV ON COURTESY AND HUMILITY

After the washing of hands, Chāṅgdev took his seat. 101. Then the *Jangam* quickly brought *pānsupārī* and himself gave it to all present, garlanding the great *yogī* with fragrant flowers mixed with powders and *tulsī* and then worshipping him. 102. Said Chāṅgdev to Mallikārjuna, 'I have to go to the city of Bedar; now be careful and do not play any tricks on anyone. 103. You have the position of being the chief *Jangam*; you should be courteous to all those who come to you, and look upon all creatures as being essentially one; only if you do this will you be blessed in your earthly life. 104. Give food to all living creatures, and if in appeasing their hunger you can only be free from the pride of saying, "I am the giver," then you will be blessed in your earthly life. 105. Your disciples serve you and you should regard them as like God; you should not think of the one being the worshipper and the other as the one worshipped; only by avoiding such thoughts will you be blessed in your earthly life. 106. When a man immersed in earthly things fulfils his promises, only then should you give a blessing; never give a curse to anyone; only in this way will you be blessed in your earthly life.' 107. Hearing these words of Chāṅgdev, the *Ayyā* (or chief *Jangam*) was much pleased and he exclaimed, 'I will conduct myself just as you, my *Svāmī*, have advised me. 108. My one desire is that your kind

hand should always be upon me.' With these words he prostrated himself on the ground before Chāṅgdev, 109. who arose at once and lifting up Mallikārjuna he held him to his bosom; and then taking leave of them all, Chāṅgdev and his disciples started for Bedar. 110. Mighty is the power of association with good people; great influence is recognized at once even by the wicked. How can anyone compare that which is incomparable? For it has even made Purushottam (i.e., Vishnu) subservient. 111. A saint and God, the two are but one; there is no difference; in order to awaken men to their true needs, good men have become *avatārs* visible to men. 112. Through the pride of being a king, that sinful Muhammadan like an ignorant child became intoxicated, and destroyed the temple at Pandharī, turning it into a mosque.

CHĀNGDEV'S KĪRTAN IN BEDAR

113. In order to take down the Muslim king's pride Chāṅgdev was going to Bedar where he reached at noon and encamped beside a lake there. 114. After bathing and performing his devotions and finishing the other regular and occasional rites, and after having taken a very light meal, he began his *kīrtan*. 115. The bands of musicians with raised banners, cymbal, *vīṇā* and drum with their sweet music, formed the accompaniment to the *kīrtan* and God's name was praised with shouts of love. 116. 'Oh Krishna, Vishnu, Hari, Govind, Unchanging and Infinite One, the Root of Joy, the Supreme Being, the Supreme Essence, Shri Mukund, and *Guru* of the world!' 117. Praying to God in this way these Vaishnavs sang of His goodness; there was great joy upon earth, and people assembled and listened. 118. Those, with Chāṅgdev numbered over a thousand and to them were joined other pious citizens. 119. With the loud playing of the cymbal, drum and *vīṇā* the air reverberated with the sound, while the people listened to the *kīrtan* and shouted out in the joy

of love. 120. An astrologer who was accustomed to sit at the door of the palace was a supremely pious Vaishnav; he came suddenly to where Chāṅgdev was and made obeisance to him. 121. Though the *kīrtan* continued for three hours, he sat giving close attention as Chāṅgdev the noble Vaishnav sang the final song of praise and waved lights over the Husband of Rukmini. 122. Sweetmeats were distributed as favours and then Chāṅgdev quietly sat down.

AN ASTROLOGER'S ADVICE

The astrologer then said to him, 'Kindly listen to my request. 123. This Muhammadan king over the city of Bedar is a man of intense pride and of evil character; he has destroyed many temples and turned them into mosques. 124. If he hears any Vaishnavs reciting the deeds of God, or hears one reading the *Purāṇs*, he punishes them; destroying the Hindu religion he has started another quite contrary. 125. The rascal has destroyed Shri Pāṇdurang's temple and turned it into a mosque; no one there was able to resist his wish and so the god was hidden. 126. You may know all this and it is not well for you to come to this place, for if the king hears that you have come for that purpose he will greatly insult you. 127. On account of the orders of this Muhammadan no one sounds even a drum, and when he sees the pomp surrounding you he will become intensely angry. 128. If he had known you were coming to Bedar he would have given you trouble, but the king is passing through a great sorrow and is in an anxious state.' 129. Hearing this news, Chāṅgdev asked the astrologer, 'What is the sorrow which the king has? Tell me in detail.' 130. He answered: 'The king's beautiful and favourite wife has been bitten by a serpent, and he has brought to her the most distinguished of physicians; 131. but no remedies were of any value; life has left her and

she is lying a corpse. They have since opened her abdomen and have filled it with fragrant spices. 132. They have placed the corpse on a palanquin and tomorrow it will be sent to the burial ground; the king is therefore in great grief at losing his dear wife.'

CHĀNGDEV AT THE ROYAL PALACE

133. Having heard this story, Chāngdev said to him, 'Go and tell the king that I will raise the corpse to life. 134. Pādurang, the Giver of eternal life, the God of the six qualities,* the mine of glory, is pleased with me and has given me the *mantra* that gives life. 135. Tell the king that a *bhakta* of Vishnu has come and that he will surely be able to bring the corpse to life again.' 136. As the great *yogī* said this the noble Brāhman was much pleased, and he went to the door of the palace and told the good news. 137. He said, 'Your good fortune is of the highest order; for that reason a *sannyāsī* has arrived here, who has already lived fourteen hundred years and still he puts off death. 138. It is because of your good fortune to-day that he has suddenly come here, and he has made me a promise that he will raise your dead one to life again.' 139. The king said to the Brāhman, 'Bring him here to me and if he will bring my wife to life again I will give him whatever he may ask.' 140. The king having said this the noble Brāhman set off and came to Chāngdev to whom he made a reverent *namaskār*. 141. Informing him of all that had happened, the Brāhman said to him, 'Swāmī, come there with me.' Chāngdev then started with his followers, all nodding their heads as they praised God in their love. 142. Accompanied by the sweet music of cymbal, *vīṇā* and drum the Vaishnavs sang of the deeds of Vishnu and the sound echoed in the sky as all cried out, 'Victory! Victory!' 143. In this way Chāngdev

* See under *Shadguna* (the six attributes of God) in *Stories of Indian Saints* II, p. 437.

arrived at the palace gate and the king honoured him in many ways but made him no *namaskār*. 144. He remarked, 'He looks like a Hindu fakir, and many such appear to be rank hypocrites. How can he raise the dead? I doubt his ability.'

IMPORTANCE OF AN OBEISANCE

145. Chāṅgdev understood his thoughts and said to himself, 'We are absolute *bhaktas* of Vishnu, and, oh king! if we do not bow down to Him, then how will God come to our help? 146. Even though we should use all possible means, but at the same time do not make our *namaskār* to Him, then the Husband of Rukmini will not be pleased. Such is the teaching of the *Shāstras*. 147. One who may be quite unable to perform *yoga* practices, sacrifices, worship or adoration, but who makes a bow with feelings of devotion, all good deeds are contained in that act. 148. Even if one does not perform baths or morning and evening devotions, or make offerings, or study the *Vedas*, or listen to the *Purāṇs*, but if he bows to God, all good deeds are contained in that act. 149. If it is not convenient to bathe at sacred bathing places, or to perform religious acts, or to give to those who are worthy, yet if we cast aside all pride and bow to God, all good deeds are contained in that act. 150. A reverent obeisance is the highest means, for through obeisance the feelings are revealed; and bowing to God is the easiest way for attaining the supreme God. 151. It costs nothing to bow to God; it is convenient for the poor and helpless; and there is no deed so good as bowing to God, for it destroys conceit. 152. One may receive instructions from one's *sadguru* and offer to him body, mind and property, but if finally one does not make a *namaskār*, all the other means used are in vain. 153. One cannot have *bhakti* unless it is joined to reverent bowing; final deliverance cannot be had without reverent bowing.

Though this is so, the evil-minded Muhammadan still keeps his pride in his heart. 154. Now I must show him a miracle which will induce him to believe and will make him bow to this circle of the Vaishnavs, for then alone can he be blessed.'

CHĀNGDEV CONVINCES THE MUSLIM KING

155. Saying this to himself the Lord of the *yogīs* raised his hand in the air, and taking a handful of ashes he scattered it among those assembled. 156. A most wonderful thing then happened; listen to it, you wise *bhaktas*. As the ashes fell over them, all their forms changed. 157. Chāngdev and all his attendants were seen by the Hindus as noble Vaishnavs, but to the sight of the Muhammadan king they seemed to have become Muhammadan saints; 158. just as Shri Krishna when he was an *avatār* seemed to Yashodā like an infant child, and at the same time to Rādhā he seemed a young man like Cupid; 159. or just as the Supreme Brahṁ is explained in the *Vedānta*, *bhaktas* see it as a Being with qualities, but those who have divine knowledge seem to see it only as without qualities; for He thus appears in two forms; 160. in that same way to the Hindu, Chāngdev appeared as a Vaishnav, but to the Muhammadan he appeared to be a Muhammadan saint; this seems to me most remarkable. 161. Then the king with a repentant heart exclaimed, 'They are all our family deities;' and with this he bowed prostrate on the ground lovingly before Chāngdev. 162. He then said to the king, 'I am pleased with you; whatever wish you have in your heart, tell me now. 163. I am a *bhakta* of Vishnu, and I have descended as an *avatār* upon this earth in order to do good to others. Whatever you may wish, tell me.'

THE DEAD QUEEN BROUGHT TO LIFE

164. Thus requested by the great *yogī*, the king joined his hands together, palm to palm, and made this request :

My wife has gone to the other world. Raise her to life again, oh *Swāmī*. 165. She is my favourite and senior queen, and my beloved. Bitten by a serpent she has died and the corpse has been embalmed by fragrant spices being placed within her*. 166. If you will raise her to life at this time I shall be happy in my worldly affairs.' Saying this, the king continued to plead by grasping Chāṅgdev's feet. 167. On a past occasion the Husband of Rukmini had been pleased with Chāṅgdev and had given him the life-giving *mantra*; this *mantra* the great *yogī* now repeated and gave to the king some ashes. 168. Said he, 'Put these ashes upon the brow of the corpse; rub them all over her body and through the mercy of Shri Hari she will arise and sit up.' 169. The king immediately went into an inner room, where he applied the ashes to the whole body, and then a most wonderful thing happened. 170. Suddenly the queen screamed and sat up. The Muhammadan explained the facts to her, but in her hazy condition of mind she did not reply. 171. That she had come to life again was a great comfort to the king, but because her mind seemed to be restless he was very sad. Thus in great trouble the Muhammadan came and spoke to Chāṅgdev, 172. saying, 'Life has come back to the corpse, but she does not seem to be in her right mind; tell me what I should do.' 173. Then Chāṅgdev said to the king, 'Go and tell her to ask whatever she wishes, and I will certainly provide it for you.' 174. Thus instructed by the great *yogī* the king again went into the inner room where his queen was seated on the bed and he immediately put to her this question : 175. 'What is it that you wish for? I will certainly provide it for you.' Hearing what her husband said, she immediately came to her senses, 176. and said, 'I want to go as a suppliant with full reverence

*This is a paraphrase, not a translation.

to him who has brought my life back. I want you to give him whatever he may ask. Then only will my life remain.' 177. Hearing what his wife said he immediately gave her the promise, and coming back to Chāṅgdev he gladly made him a *namaskār*. 178. He said, 'My wife has become as clear-minded as she was before. Now ask me whatever you may desire, for I know that you, oh Mighty One, are a portion of God.' 179. The king having placed before him pearls and jewels and a pile of money, Chāṅgdev laughed and then said to the king, 180. 'I am an indifferent Vaishnav and without any earthly desires. A heap of money to me is exactly like a heap of pebbles. All the *siddhis* are favourable to me and I have nothing lacking.'

PANDHARPUR TEMPLE TO BE REBUILT

181. The king replied, 'Request something of me.' In answer to this, Vateshwar (i. e., Chāṅgdev) said, 182. 'In that ancient sacred city of Pandharpur the Husband of Indirā (i. e., Krishna) is there in visible form. The *badās* are special attendants on the idol. 183. You have given them trouble in many ways and you have destroyed the temple and on that spot you have built a mosque. By making people abandon their Hindu faith, irreligion has greatly increased. 184. Please write a letter yourself to your chief officer at that place saying, 'Immediately destroy the mosque and build a temple in its place up to the very pinnacle.' 185. Thus requested by the *bhakta* of Vishnu he had a letter written by his scribe, and he signed and sealed it with his own hand, adding that it must be obeyed; 186. and that henceforth no evil-minded Muhammadan must give trouble in that sacred city. The evil-minded king having written this letter, Chāṅgdev himself took the envelope. 187. He also took with him four hundred Bedarī artisans and did a most remarkable thing, for

he applied the ashes to all their foreheads and made them take the route through the air. 188. The sun had only been risen for two watches when they arrived at the sacred city of Pandharpur, all shouting out the name of Vitthal with cries of 'Victory ! Victory !' 189. People of the sacred city who had been anxious about their lives now suddenly heard that the *bhakta* had come back victorious. 190. It was then proclaimed that Chāṅgdev had performed a miracle and had brought a letter from the Muhammadan king that the mosque should be demolished and a temple be erected in its place. 191. Hearing this good news, the dwellers in the holy city rejoiced greatly and came and met Chāṅgdev with a joy that knew no bounds. 192. Hands were clapped with cries of 'Victory ! Victory !' and the whole assembly of *bhaktas* rejoiced. They exclaimed, 'The power of this great man Chāṅgdev has conquered the evil of this *Kali Yuga*. 193. In the next chapter the Husband of Rukmini will enable me to relate another story. Mahipati is writing these blessed verses on the authority of books written regarding the saints. 194. *Swasti* (Peace) ! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmrit*. By merely listening to it, the desires of the heart are fulfilled. Listen then, you God-loving pious *bhaktas*. This is the ninth deeply delightful chapter.

CHAPTER X

LIFE OF CHĀNGDEV

(*Continued*)

INVOCATION

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to Shri Pāndurang. The lotus face of Hari looks bright like pure nectar; his dark body is beautiful and clear, and on it is the Vaijayanti garland. 2. Earrings shine in his ears like Jupiter and Venus in the sky; the sky cannot contain the lustre of his yellow garment, for it flashes like the lightning. 3. His eyebrows are very beautiful and his eyes look like the petals of a lotus. The Life of the world has a smile on his face as he concentrates his attention on the tip of his nose. 4. The lustrous Kaustubh jewel shines around his neck. The Lord of the world has arms reaching to the knees, around his wrists shine the hero's bracelets, and the sight of him cools the eyes. 5. On his chest is the *Shrīvatsa* mark* which is the mine of all fortune; on his abdomen are the three beautiful wrinkles which bewitched Indirā (i. e., Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth). 6. Around his waist is the silken thread, around his neck are garlands of flowers, and on his hips shine his lotus hands. Seeing such an image, Dhūrjati (i. e., Shiva) was satisfied at heart. 7. His posture is beautiful and tender; his parallel feet look beautiful on a brick; in him the mind stays for ever with love.

VITHOBĀ'S TEMPLE REBUILT

8. In the last chapter was related the delightful story of Chāngdev's going to Bedar, his raising a dead

* See *Stories of Indian Saints* II, Vol. 10 in this series, pp. 408 (on 'Brigu'), and 431.

body to life, and after that his going to Pandharpur 9. As the inhabitants of the sacred town heard the account they were satisfied at heart, and they came to visit Chāṅgdev with affection for him. 10. They said, 'You are a noble Vaishnav, performing wonders in the presence of the evil-minded; you have become an *avatār* to renew the path of devotion.' 11. He at once showed to the town officials the letter he had brought from Bedar and then stonediggers were engaged and the mosque was pulled down. 12. Craftsmen also having been engaged, the building of the temple in a circular form was started; and for the daily period of work a handful of *hons* (i. e., gold coins) was given as wages. 13. Hearing this, listeners may doubt as to where he could get so much money to distribute; therefore let them understand that all the *siddhis* (accomplishments personified) waited upon him. 14. He deceived *Kālī* (i. e., the evil age) and *Kāla* (i. e., death) and brought to life a dead body; so the question where he obtained so much money arises from a groundless doubt. 15. In the place where Gorakshanāth passed there arose a mountain of gold* and as soon as he blew the pipe Chāṅgdev took birth there. 16. Therefore this Vateshwar (Chāṅgdev) is the lord of all accomplishments, who by the power of his devotion made the God of gods subject to him. 17. He did not like to depend upon his accomplishments though they bowed at his feet; but in order to carry out God's work he made use of them. 18. Among the thousand names of Shri Vishnu, Dvaipāyan (i. e., Vyāsa) has given Shri Hari those two names, 'creator of fear' and 'destroyer of fear.' 19. In order to show this to be true, He had the temple pulled down by the Muslims, and performing wonderful actions in various ways He gave success to his *bhaktas*. 20. Knowing beforehand the importance of the

* This sentence is a paraphrase, not a translation.

future work, the Giver of salvation met Chāṅgdev, gave him the life-giving *mantra* and so brought the queen to life. 21. Thereby the king became pleased and he gave a letter of authority to Chāṅgdev; then the mosque was at once pulled down, and the building of the temple in its place was started. 22. Every day two thousand men worked at the temple and at sunset Chāṅgdev distributed the *hons* (or gold coins).

VITHOBĀ RESCUED FROM A CELLAR AFTER TWO YEARS

23. For one year Chāṅgdev himself lived on in Pandharpur, and when the temple was nearing the pinnacle he asked the Brāhmins for an auspicious day. 24. He said, 'Find out an auspicious day, and on that day seat the Husband of Rukmini on the throne, so that he may save the dull and ignorant by the mere sight of him.' 25. At this the Brāhmins said, 'Today is the tenth of *Kṛtik*, and an auspicious day. Install the image in the temple today. This is the wish of all.' 26. Then Chāṅgdev entered the cellar (where the idol was hidden) along with the *Bachas* (i. e., the priests of Vithobā), and seeing the image of Shri Pandurang there, they prostrated themselves before it. 27. For two years there had been no worship at all; on the idol's head there was a worn out cap and its body was covered with dust. 28. The image was beautiful and tender with the two hands on the hips; around the waist there was a *dhotar*; and the Soul of the world was standing with parallel feet on a brick. 29. I think Shripati sat in the cellar in order to get an experience of *samādhi* (bodily unconsciousness) and to learn how the *yogīs* enjoy it. 30. When Chāṅgdev saw this, he said, 'O Giver of salvation, Thou art the God of gods, and Thy fame is sung in the *Purāns*. 31. Such being the case, oh King of Pandhari, why didst Thou hide Thyself in the cellar ? Perhaps in order to test

Thy *bhaktas* Thou hast created this big display of Thy *māyā*. 32. Thou didst become a fish and destroy Shan-khāsura. O Lord of Pandharī, how is it that Thou didst hide Thyself in the cellar? 33. O Lord of the world, Thou didst become the tortoise, and didst hold Mount Mandār on Thy back; that through any fear of Muslims Thou dost hide Thyself in difficulty is simply a wonder. 34. Once Thou didst become a boar and didst hold the earth on Thy tusks, and that Thou didst hide Thyself in the cellar is indeed a wonder to me. 35. When Pralhād remembered Thee, Thou didst manifest Thyself in a pillar as *Narakesari* or lion-man*, then why didst Thou hide Thyself in a cellar (through fear of any Muslim)? This is amazing. 36. Becoming Trivikram, O Vanamālī, Thou didst send Bali to the nether world. That Thou shouldst find *Kālī* (evil age) mightier than that is to me a great wonder. 37. Thou who art Ekāṅgavir (i.e., Vishnu) and the *avatār* of the axe-bearer, and didst wipe off the earth the Kshatriya race; oh redeemer of the world, that Thou didst hide Thyself through fear of the Muslims is to me very strange. 38. Thou didst become the Shri Rāma *avatār*, and didst kill Rāvan and Kumbhakarna. Hast Thou now forgotten that valour of Thine, and so didst hide Thyself here? 39. Thou didst become Shri Krishna, the voluntary actor, and didst kill mighty and wicked demons; and now in the *Kālī Yuga* (the evil age) why art Thou sitting hiding in a cellar? 40. Thou art the controller of *Kālī* (evil age) and *Kāla* (death). This is a well-known statement of the *Purāṇs*. For whom hast Thou reserved that valour? Please tell me this secret of Thy heart.'

VITTHOBĀ REINSTALLED

41. Upon hearing these words of Chāṅgdev, the image of Pāṇdurang smiled and said, 'In order to increase

* See *Stories of Indian Saints*, II, pp. 404, 406, 421

the reputation of *bhaktas* like you, I have devised this plan! 42. Knowing the future event beforehand, oh my dear Chāṅgdev, I gave you a sight of me, and whispering in your ear the life-giving *mantra* I have shaded you with my mercy. 43. I am the pervader of the world, and am both the actor and the cause of action. This your statement is true. I created an evil wish in the Muslim king and made him commit a wrong. 44. Then I took the form of a serpent, bit his queen and killed her; you arrived there as the expert physician of the gods and I gave you success. 45. In fact I am without qualities and without form, without duty or employment; it was only in order to spread your reputation that I hid myself in this place.' 46. Thus said the image of mercy to Chāṅgdev who had experienced it; from his eyes streamed tears of joy and love for God became intense in his heart. 47. Chāṅgdev then placed his head at the lotus feet and lifted the image and all the *bhaktas* loudly cried, 'Victory! Victory!' and clapped their hands. 48. As the image was brought outside, the inhabitants of the sacred town felt delighted and with ardent desire for the sight of God, they looked at the God of gods. 49. As the Husband of Rukminī became seated on the throne, the rumour travelled far and wide; large crowds of pilgrims assembled there and created great clamour by the repetition of the name of God. 50. Chāṅgdev then said, 'Let us take the image to the bank of the Bhīmā river, and bathe the god there.' This proposal all liked. 51. Then the image was put into a palanquin, and Pāṇdurang was brought to the bank of the Chandrabhāgā, while the *Haridāsas* in great love sang with the help of cymbals, *vinās* and drums. 52. There was Garud (i. e., the eagle) with banners, and the musical instruments were sounded; various kinds of banners fluttered in the wind, and the sound of it all filled the sky. 53. The image was carried near Pundlik and

was given a bath by repeating hymns of the *Vedas*. Just then all the sacred waters arrived to get themselves purified, the wonderful event being witnessed by the people. 54. Suddenly at that moment the waters of the Chandra-bhāgā rose, as a large wave might arise in the ocean and pass away at once. 55. Large crowds of pilgrims had assembled in the sandy bed of the river; they even had a bath with all their clothes on,* and they said, 'Blessed, blessed is this day, for all our sins have been destroyed.' 56. The god was thus bathed, and leaving Pundlik on the right the men carried in procession the image of the god who is the dearest friend of his loving *bhaktas*. 57. The Lord of gods (i. e., Indra) came there invisibly in his chariot of light and said, 'This land is holy and sanctifying, for the Lord of Vaikunth has come here of his own accord.' 58. After these words the gods showered flowers, and the Vaishnavs who were performing the song-service enjoyed abounding happiness. 59. The musicians beat the musical instruments, and the sound reverberated through the sky, while the *Haridāsas* sang with reverence in sweet tunes. 60. The dancers danced and sang, and behind them came the chariot in the procession which was thickly crowded, the people gazing intently at the Supreme Brahm. 61. They said, 'Let us look at Him to our full satisfaction as long as the god is in the open street. When once He sits on the throne, great efforts are needed to get a sight of Him.' 62. After saying this they gazed at the god till their eyes were satisfied; the people indeed felt satisfied as they saw the Giver of salvation. 63. The Husband of Rukmini was thus carried in procession as far as the great door, and then the image was taken into the temple by a change of hands. 64. The Life of the world was seated on the

* The idea here is that the sense of sin is so vivid that the pilgrim's very clothes must also be washed.

throne, then bathed in the five nectars,* and many people brought curds and milk in slings. 65 *Hrishīkeshi* (the Lord of the heart) looked beautiful, and he could be compared with Himself only. In Pandharī there was a Shrī Hari watch-night service in the month of *Kārtik* (October or November). 66. From the month of *Ashvin* (October) until the *tenth* of *Kārtik* (November) the Life of the world was bathed with milk and thus looked very beautiful. 67. The sky is naturally blue, and in it shines the moonlight; and in the same way the Life of the world appeared to me when curds were put on Him. 68. After this the god was given a bath, and the worshippers put on Him various kinds of garments and ornaments. 69. Around His waist there was the divine silken yellow robe, and on His head the crown studded with jewels looked very beautiful. In His ears were the crocodile earrings, and around His neck shone the garlands of flowers. 70. On His forehead was applied the spot of saffron, and on all His body was sprinkled the odorous black powder (*bukkā*); the Cloud-dark One had around His neck garlands of tender *tulsī*. 71. Incense and lights and camphor were waved over Him, and offerings of daintily cooked food were placed before Him. The Brāhmans repeated hymns from the *Vedas*, and in the end they offered a handful of flowers. 72. Satyabhāmā, Rāhī, and Rukminī (Vithobā's wives) were also worshipped in the same manner, and at the great temple-door the Vaishnavs were performing *kīrtans* joyfully. 73. In the meantime all the Brāhmans came to the eagle platform after bathing and in silk clothes; there they were served with dainty foods when all dined. 74. Chāṅgdev himself distributed the betelnut rolled leaves and the gifts of money to the Brāhmans, and all the people performed the

* See *Stories of Indian Saints*, II, p. 432, under the word *Panchāmrit*.

festival even in their own houses. 75. Women whose husbands were living distributed yellow and red termeric powders, offering presents and waving over the god the platters of five lights. 76. When Rāmchandra lost the throne (and was sent into exile), all the people of Ayodhyā felt very concerned; but when Raghuvīra (i. e., Rāmchandra) returned victorious they were mightily delighted. 77. Similarly when the Husband of Rukminī sat on the throne, all the inhabitants of the sacred town rejoiced, in every house a flag was hoisted, and sugar was distributed. 78. On the new moon day and on the first day of the month, the husband of Rohinī (the moon) is not at all seen; but when a small crest of it appears on the second day, all look at it. 79. In the same manner the image of Pāndurang was in hiding for two years; therefore the people had a most ardent desire to get a sight of it, and so they came to visit it with love.

SAMĀDHI AT PUNTĀMBĀ ENJOINED ON CHĀNGDEV

80. Chāngdev then renewed all the old things of the city and people remarked, 'Blessed is this noble Vaishnav; he has descended as an *avatār* to save the world.' 81. Once he went into the temple and devotedly prostrated himself before the Lord of Pandhārī and asked, 'Which place hast Thou chosen for my *Samādhi** (i. e., for me to enter the tomb alive)?' 82. Hearing such a question, the Husband of Rukminī replied, 'On the bank of the Godāvārī river is the best place. In the sacred town of *Punyastambha* (i. e., modern Puntāmbā) you will take *Samādhi* (i. e., you will enter on your final rest). 83. On the eleventh day of the bright fortnight of *Ashādh* (June or July) I will come there every year.' So *Hrishīkeshī* (i. e., Vithobā) with his own lips gave Chāngdev the blessing. 84. He added, 'Instruct the descendants of the followers of your sect that they should come here with bands of singers of God's praises, and with

* See Appendix on *Samādhi*.

banners, in the month of *Kārtik* (October or November). 85. On the tenth of *Ashādh* (July) I will come to the bank of the Godāvāri river; in this way the men and women who come there will have made the pilgrimage to Pandhari.' 86. As Shripati (i.e., Vithobā) gave this blessing, Chāngdev felt delighted at heart; he sent for two of his disciples, and they performed a *kīrtan*. 87. The *sadguru* ordered the son of his blessing, *Bhāllavandya*.† On the twelfth day of the bright fortnight of *Kārtik* (November) you should satisfy the Brāhmans with food.' 88. Since the order of the *sadguru*, this is still being practised, and his descendants live in the place called Jogāiche Ambe. 89. Chāngdev stayed there until the outhouses for the pilgrims were built at the temple, and since that time large crowds of pilgrims go there on the eleventh day (of the bright fortnight) of *Kārtik* (November) every year. 90. He (Chāngdev) placed his head at the feet of Vitthal, and begged for his leave to go; from his eyes tears of joy flowed, and he spoke with his throat choked with emotion. 91. Said he, 'Oh God of gods, Lord of Pandhari, may Thy mercy be on me now. Aside from Thee, oh Husband of Rukminī, who is there to look on me with affection?' 92. Pāndurang then replied, 'I stay in your heart for ever, but I am going to tell you something more, so listen to it with attention. 93. I have given you the six-lettered *mantra*. You impart it to your son, and in order to help others, let this same *mantra* descend in every line of your disciples. 94. But the life-giving *mantra* which I have given you will not be fruitful to anyone except yourself.' As the Lord of Pandhari said this, Chāngdev fell at His feet. 95. Then *Hrishīkeshi* (Vithobā) added, 'On the bright eleventh day of *Ashādh* (July) I will come there (to Puntāmbā) and worship at your *Samādhi* (i.e., tomb). 96. The pilgrims who will go to visit you there will reap

† See page 127 on this name and story.

the fruit of coming to Pandhari. This I repeat thrice as a promise, which do not hesitate to believe. 97. On the tenth day the bands of singers will go in procession, and on the eleventh there should be a song-service to Hari; on the twelfth day distribute favours of sweetmeats; receive this order of mine as your authority. 98. I have given you this blessing, and now go back to your place.' As Chāṅgdev heard this, he rolled himself at the god's feet 99. and said, 'Oh Lord of the helpless, Shri Hari, let Thy mercy be on me.' Then Chāṅgdev took leave of Rāhi and Rukmini. 100. He took leave of the Lord of Vaikunth and arrived on the bank of the Chandrabhāgā. He visited Pundlik and made a humble bow to all the saints. 101. Leaving Pandharpur on his right, Chāṅgdev started on his way and *Shāraṅgḍhar* (i. e., Vithobā) in haste came to see him off. 102. The god saw his dear friend off as far as the bank of the Chandrabhāgā. There they embraced each other and experienced the joy of love. 103. Then placing his head at the idol's feet, he said, 'Oh Shri Hari, come to the bank of the Godāvari to give me *Samādhi*.' 104. As the chief of the *yogīs* thus pleaded, the Lord of All replied, 'Surely.' Then as he (Chāṅgdev) reached the other bank of the Bhumā, he looked back, 105. just as a girl going to her husband's house looks back every now and then (to her mother's house); this was the state of Chāṅgdev; he could not bear separation from the god.

CHĀNGDEV ENTERS THE TOMB

106. After seeing His *bhṛta* off, *Hrishīkeshi* (Vithobā) returned to the temple, and Chāṅgdev with his followers reached *Punvastambha* (i. e., Puntāmbā). 107. As he got near the sacred town the inhabitants came out to receive him, bowing to the chief of the *yogīs* and embracing him with love. 108. Then he entered his house and bowed down to the image of Keshav (i. e., Vishnu). Chāṅgdev had

two sons ; listen to their names. 109. The name of the elder son was Keshav and that of the younger was Vithobā. Calling his elder son, Chāṅgdev said, ' Receive my *mantra*.' 110. Placing his hand on his head, after the ceremony of worship he gave him the six-lettered *mantra*. 111. He told him, ' After I enter *samādhi* (i. e., final rest) you must give the *mantra* to Vithobā and solemnly resolve to go to Pandhari regularly in the month of *Kārtik* (November). 112. Worship the *sagun* image of Keshavrāja for ever, and go in procession on the tenth day of *Ashādh* with bands of singers of God's praise.' Thus he explained to him fully the method of future action. 113. After advising his son in this manner he fixed the day for entering *samādhi* (i. e., his final rest). It was in the *Shaka** year 1247 (or A. D. 1325) and the name of the *Samvatsara* (i. e., year) was *Krodhan*. 114. On the seventh day of the bright half of *Jyeshtha* (June), on a Sunday, there were the *siddhi yoga* and *pushya nakshatra* (i. e., the name of a constellation). It was the great festival of the seventh day dedicated to the sun, and this was the day fixed by the chief of the *yogīs* for his *samādhi* (i. e., final rest). 115. Then he worshipped the image of Keshavrāja in all the sixteen ways with love, falling prostrate before the god; and having taken its leave he started. 116. The Vaishnavs began to perform song-services, and all the inhabitants of the sacred town, including learned Brāhmins well-versed in the Vedas, set off. 117. Hearing the news that the chief of the *yogīs* was going into *samādhi* (i. e., his place of rest) large crowds of pilgrims assembled at the spot, shouting loudly the names of Vitthal and worshipping him. 118. There were bands of singers and various kinds of banners, the musical instruments produced a sweet sound, and with this pomp all of them arrived near the *Soma-firtha* (a sacred pond of that name). 119. On the bank

*On *Shaka* see Appendix.

of the Godāvarī river he (Chāngdev) bathed, and then he bowed down to *Someshwar* with the firm conviction that Janārdan (God) fills the whole universe. 120. Therefore Chāngdev bowed down to all with love, and said, 'Let your favour be on me.' 121. Seeing this, all the people rolled themselves at the feet of Chāngdev and the eyes of all were moistened with tears, thinking they would no more have a sight of him. 122. Then at the bottom of the *Ashvattha* tree Chāngdev sat in the posture of *Padmāsana* (i. e., one of the postures in *yoga*). As he remembered the feet of Pāndurang, the *sagun* image of him appeared before him. 123. He offered the Dweller of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven) mental worship, and then he took his soul to the top of his head (literally *Brahmāndhī*) and forgot all bodily consciousness. 124. The Vaishnavs shouted loudly 'Victory ! Victory.' and proclaimed the names of God. After their acclamations of love a song-service was performed, and then the platter of lights was devotedly waved over *Shri Hari*. 125. Then after worshipping the *samādhi* (or place of rest), all the people returned to their homes. Every year pilgrims came from afar and thus the glory of Chāngdev increased. 126. Ever and anon watch-nights were observed there, the Brāhmans reading the *Purāns*, and in the month of *Ashādh* (July) there came large numbers of pilgrims.

CHĀNGDEV EMERGES AND GIVES HIS SON THE *MANTRA*

127. Twelve years after the *samādhi* (of Chāngdev) there took place a very strange event; let hearers listen to it with reverence. 128. The elder son of Chāngdev was entertaining hatred for his younger brother, wishing to possess the authority after his father. 129. His father had given him moral instruction and had told him to give the *mantra* to his younger brother; but he did not like that;

*See Appendix on *Brahmānda*.

for his mind was given up to worldly affairs. 130. After the lapse of twelve years Vithobā said to his elder brother: 'Give me the *mantra* in obedience to the order of the *Svāmī* (their father).' 131. Though he earnestly pleaded, the evil-minded (brother) would not listen to him. What is destined to come to pass, does so in a very strange way and no one knows his fate. 132. He said, 'You are not authorized to receive the six-lettered *mantra*. I now possess the authority, so eat bread and be happy.' 133. When Vithobā was spoken to so sharply, his mind became concerned and he remarked, '(The elder brother) does not give me the *mantra*. What shall I do?' 134. But the elder brother troubled the younger in various ways, and even considered him as his enemy when he saw him at a distance. 135. Though he received worship from the people, speaking to them very humbly, yet he hated his own dear and near one, and his heart had become foul. 136. Seeing this condition of his elder brother, Vithobā's mind became sad and he went and sat in the place where Chāṅgdev was entombed. 137. Eating neither fruit, root, nor food, he determined to carry out his resolve to its farthest bounds and said, 'Oh *Svāmī*, show me your feet once at least.' 138. In this way he sat there over three days and three nights and then Chāṅgdev suddenly appeared and showed himself to him. 139. The chief of the *yogīs* appeared with his cane and broom, and then brought his son to consciousness and said, 'Ask for any boon you desire.' 140. When the son saw him in that form, he rolled himself before him and clasping his feet he said, 'Oh *Svāmī*, give me the *mantra*.' 141. As the son thus requested his father, the chief of the *yogīs* said, 'By all means. Don't feel concerned, but go home. 142. I will give you the *mantra*, and will also instruct you about the line of conduct for the followers of my sect. Then I will enter my tomb again; don't have any anxiety.' 143. When the chief of the *yogīs* thus

spoke Vithobā returned to his house, and at the sunrise he gathered together everything necessary for the ceremony. 144. Arriving near the *samādhi* (place of rest) of his father on the tenth day of the month with bands of singers and banners, all saw Chāngdev with their own eyes, at which they greatly wondered. 145. They said, 'It is twelve years since he entered *samādhi* (final rest).' To have had a sight of him after so long, made them happy at heart. 146. Some carried the rumour into the sacred town that Chāngdev had appeared again, and all the inhabitants came to see him and prostrated themselves before him in true devotion. 147. Then Vithobā took the band of singers in procession through the town, and the *bhaktas* of Vishnu performed a *kīrtan*, Chāngdev also going with them. 148. Coming to his house he angrily cursed his elder son, saying, 'You wretched one, you have disobeyed me, so I will make you childless.' 149. Then he favoured Vithobā with his *mantra*.

CHĀNGDEV FORETELLS THE FUTURE

After thinking in his mind, he also explained to Vithobā the events which were to take place in the future. 150. He said to Vithobā, 'Your family line will grow. God's *bhaktas* will be born in your family, and they will continue my order. 151. For six generations many pilgrims will come here, and know for certain that the glory of this place will increase extraordinarily. 152. In the seventh generation this order will no more exist; this I can discern with my eye of knowledge. Listen also to their manner of living. 153. The man of the seventh generation will be a perfect *bhakta* of God, but will not worship Keshav. Through trouble from the Muslims my *samādhi* (place of rest) will be broken down. 154. People will degenerate and will not come as pilgrims. Then in order to revive my sect, I, Chāngdev, will again be born in

your family.' 155. In this manner he told him about future events and then again entered *śamādhi* (the place of rest). Seeing this marvellous event the people began to wonder. 156. They said, ' Blessed is the doing of the chief of the *yogīs*. For we saw him after twelve years had passed. He gave his *mantra* to his son and granted to the people a sight of himself. 157. Vithobā afterwards had a son to whom he gave the name of Chāṅgdev. He also increased the reputation of his sect and increased its glory. 158. The son of this Chāṅgdev was by name Pilāji (*Gosāvi*,* who followed the order of his father and obtained a good reputation. 159. From him was born that spiritual jewel, Narahari *Gosāvi*, and the son of Narahari *Gosāvi* was Janārdan of a very good character. 160. To Janārdan seven sons were born. May the wise listen to the future of those descendants. 161. Among the seven sons there was one by the name of Mudhoji. He had five sons and they conducted their family affairs happily. 162. Among those five, Gopāl was the eldest; at his time all religions had lost their influence. 163. All could see that the future events came true as had been predicted by the chief of the *yogīs*.

CHĀNGDEV BECOMES A *GOSĀVI*

Then again Chāṅgdev became an *avatār*, and he was given the name of Koneri. 164. He was incarnated again in his illustrious family; and he enjoyed a complete life of a hundred years and revived devotion. 165. Near the *śamādhi* (place of rest) of Chāṅgdev he planted *ashvattha* trees; he also erected an altar there, and thus completed the *matha* (monastery). 166. Again on the bright eleventh of *Ashādh* (July) people came as pilgrims. They bathed in the Godāvarī river and listened to the song-services. 167. Then taking a band of singers

*See Appendix on *Gosāvi*.

he went to Pandharpur in the month of *Kārtik* (November), and seeing the Supreme Brahṃ (i. e., the all-pervading essence) in *śaṅṅ* form on a brick, his heart was at peace. 168. I also have seen with my eyes that statue of devotion, knowledge and indifference to worldly things. Blessed is the unfathomable doing of the saints, the authority of the *Bhāgavat* religion. 169. Although his name was Konerī *Gosāvi*, still he was in fact Chāngdev himself, having assumed a human body in order to save the dull and the ignorant. 170. His son was Shāmī *Gosāvi*, and he it was who narrated this life and in my uncouth language I have followed his narration in this book. 171. But the saints listened to my irregular language with reverence; it is like the mixing of water with milk like the mistress of a house is accustomed to do; 172. for if the milk is kept without the addition of water it does not suffice for all the members of the family. I have written only as many words as the Husband of Rakminī ordered me to write; 173. nor have I left out the original authority. I have only added some illustrations; wise and skilful readers will understand this. 174. A beggar has the support of his donor, and a blind man has the support of one who has eyes; in the same manner I am supported by the saints in writing the *Bhaktalīlāmṛt*. 175. The Merciful to the lowly, the Giver of salvation will cause me to write further in a pleasing language, for Mahipati with love leans on him for ever for his support. 176. *Svasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmṛt*. By merely listening to it, all the longings of one's heart are fulfilled. May the loving and pious *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the tenth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XI

THE STORY OF NĀNAK

GOD SUPERSERVIENT TO DEVOTION

1. Obeisance to Shrī Ganesh. Pāndurang is a mine of limitless beauty and from him all beauty emanates; he is the giver of salvation, and he has placed his hands on his hips. 2. Through his power the moon and sun shine; he assumes a beautiful *sagun* form; the one who is dark as a cloud stands at Pandhari. 3. The Husband of Ramā has for his couch the serpent *Shasha*; as he stands on a brick he enjoys the happiness of love. 4. Dhurjati (i. e., Shiva) in loneliness contemplates his form in his mind, and in order to meet Pundlik he lives on the bank of the Bhīmā. 5. Although the *yogīs* practise the eightfold *yoga*, still He does not come into their contemplation; at his wish the universe is at once destroyed and comes again into existence. 6. Although the Creator is his child, he does not know his extent; the giver of a blessing to Pundlik has become subject to the pious ones. 7. At his command the *Bhaktalīlāmrit* is written and the Husband of Rukmini spreads the fame of his servants.

A SAINT OF THE PUNJĀB

8. In the last chapter the wonderful story of Chāngdev's *samādhi* (i.e., entering on his final rest) was described and how twelve years afterwards he again bowed himself to his son. 9. In the land of the Punjab lived Nānak who was endowed with supreme knowledge, and when indifference to worldly things was aroused in him, a hindrance occurred. 10. You might ask what that was. Possessing a great fortune, he wondered in his mind how it should be spent. 11. For (said Nānak to himself) with money there are many calamities, life itself being in peril; even a

person who is indifferent to worldly things may be led to give himself up to sensual objects because he is in possession of a fortune. 12. Through the desire of a fortune, one's own brothers may become one's enemies; fortune may spoil friendship and create a scruple in one's mind. 13. Wealth begets evil intentions and destroys the good intentions of a seeker after spiritual riches; thieves destroy one's life on account of their desire for wealth. 14. Wealth is in peril of a foreign invasion; kings plunder a wealthy person; and if a rich man has a family, he is in danger of dacoity. 15. The desire for wealth is censured, if it is seen in a person considered to be free from a worldly spirit; money received in charity destroys one's possession of good deeds. 16. What is the need of describing at length the dangers arising from the possession of wealth? Even pious and loving Vaishnavs forget God when they obtain wealth. 17. A wealthy person is worn by anxiety, for he always worries how he shall protect his wealth. A wealthy person is always unsatisfied; therefore wealth is a powerful creator of hindrances. 18. So thinking to himself the wealthy Nānak was wondering how his money should be spent, so that after becoming free from hindrances he might worship Shri Hari.

NĀNAK BUILDS A TEMPLE TO THE DISLIKE OF THE MUSLIMS

19. As the result of thus thinking in his mind, he started to build a temple, but when the Muslim king saw it, hatred arose in his mind. 20. *Kali* (evil age) and *Kāla* (death) are irresistible, for the Muslim king was an evil-minded rogue; he pulled down temples and no one could resist him. 21. So the Brāhmins, the *bairāgīs*, and *bhaktas* of Vishnu were very much troubled when the rumour reached the ears of Nānak that the Muslim king had destroyed all the temples. 22. Hearing this, Nānak's mind was dejected and he began to think out what means

he should adopt. Said Nānak to himself, 'Different kinds of men have different inclinations. 23. On the earth are innumerable creatures and they have different tendencies. Men feel disgust at the sight of dung, while animals relish it. 24. All know from experience that the eating of *bachanāga* (a poisonous herb) brings death ; but how do the worms springing from it live happily ? 25. The food of some creatures is the wind, while others like ordinary food. Some live by eating grass, while others are born from water. 26. The evil-natured kill an animal and eat its flesh ; one animal lives on another animal ; there is no doubt about this. 27. The Spirit of God is present in every form of creature ; this is an established truth, though every creature has a different nature ; this is mysterious. 28. In the same piece of land people sow mustard, onion and sugarcane ; but the water becomes one with the seed and helps it to sprout. 29. Similarly the Lord of Life is seen to work in every one according to the nature he possesses ; he lets one follow his inclination and does not oppose him. 30. We should adapt ourselves to people's temperaments.' With this line of thought in his mind Nānak asked the people, 31. ' The Muslim does not like temples, and hatred is thereby aroused in his mind ; please tell me what he does like.' 32. The people replied, ' The Muslim likes mosques ; why not therefore carry out his wish ? What is the good of obstinacy ?'

NĀNAK BUILDS MOSQUES AND HINDUS HATE HIM

33. Nānak therefore reflected to himself, 'Hindus like images with qualities, and Muslims build mosques without qualities. Then which course should I adopt ? 34. If we build temples, then the villains destroy them ; but mosques will remain intact for a long time ; therefore we must follow the inclination of the Muslims.' 35. Having thought out the matter thus, he sent for stone-cutters and other craftsmen, and said, ' Now erect mosques.' Such

was the order he gave. 36. Now while the mosques were being built the Muslims were greatly delighted and said, 'After Nānak has spent all his wealth he will become a Muslim *fakīr* (i. e., a Muslim mendicant). 37. Our way of religion is good, therefore he has started the building of mosques.' But it was the voice of the evil-minded; for they did not understand the inclination of Nānak's heart. 38. As for the people of his own caste, they began to censure him, saying, 'Nānak has fallen from the right path, for he destroys all temples, and builds mosques without number.' 39. Nānak was at this juncture between two fires, and he said, 'Let me now devise a plan which will be convenient to both, Hindus and Muslims.'

NĀNAK BUILDS PRIVIES FOR ALL

40. So Nānak then destroyed both the temples and the mosques and began to build many privies. At this device all the people laughed. 41. Both the Hindus and the Muslims jointly asked Nānak, 'What is this you have done?' He replied, 'I have devised a plan which will be useful to you both. 42. The seekers of supreme knowledge worship God without qualities, while some like a god with form and qualities. Both of them talk nonsense, and their discussion never comes to an end. 43. Some say, "Shankar (i. e., Shiva) is supreme and should be worshipped for ever." Others say, "That is false, for Brahm it was who created both the moveable and the immoveable world. 44. The *Purāṇs* declare the fact that the whole creation is of the Creator; and if that Creator is worshipped, one's longings are all fulfilled." 45. On the other hand the Vaishnavs say with love, "The Creator is the child of Vishnu, therefore the God of gods, who is dark as a cloud, should always be worshipped." 46. Then the worshippers of the Sun say, "The Sun is supreme, for He throws His light on the whole world, and without the Sun there would be darkness for ever." 47. Performers of

sacrifices hold the view, "Indra is supreme, for by his order clouds send showers on the earth; 48. from the clouds food is obtained, and it is from food that beings are born." In this way do performers of sacrifices and followers of the way of works discuss. 49. Brāhmans have made three divisions of devotion, viz., work, worship, and knowledge. The great *Rishis* differentiate these three. 50. People consider as true only that which they have studied; they merely discuss between themselves and without proper enquiry of established truths. 51. Such are the ways of the various kinds of people, and to talk of them fully, one whole life would be insufficient. So the Almighty God should be worshipped by relinquishing all the different religions. 52. I suffered the hindrance of money and my mind became engrossed in it; therefore I thought of building temples; but the Muslims did not like that idea. 53. In order to satisfy their wish I started the building of mosques, and that action of mine angered my own caste who blame me for it. 54. In this dilemma I devised a different plan altogether, and therefore for both of you I have built privies. 55. This is a plan which will be of use to all of you. So I have built very many privies to meet your daily needs.* 56. As Nānak thus spoke, both the Hindus and the Muslims laughed outright and with astonished minds they went to their homes.

NĀNAK DRESSES BOTH LIKE A MUSLIM AND A HINDU

57. Nānak had conquered all the six human foes† through his power of pure and righteous indifference to worldly things, so that his peace of mind and forgiveness were firm, and he changed his apparel immediately. 58. He also wore such ornaments that he could not be distinguished either as a Muslim *faḳīr* or as a Hindu *bairāqī*, as his garb was of a mixed kind. 59. He inspired

* This verse is a very free paraphrase, not a translation.

† See under *Shadripu*, p. 437 of *Stories of Indian Saints*, vol 2.

in others an imperishable devotion to the *Nirgun* God (i.e., without attributes)* and he himself became absorbed in the form of God and forgot all bodily consciousness. 60. Men of all the eighteen castes made supplication to him with good devotion, and without hesitation he gave them the initiatory *mantra*. 61. Seeing that people began to censure him and said, 'He has abandoned his own religion and has accepted this strange garb and lives in happiness.' 62. Some said, 'He is bewitched, and so has become unconscious of body; he did not spend his money in a good cause; he liked privies.' 63. Amongst the Hindus and the Muslims there have been many notable people, but apart from him no one has built privies in the town.' 64. Some said in reply, 'Why do you censure him for nothing? There was truly great inconvenience in the absence of privies and he devised a very good plan.' 65. Women and others use them and no one drives them from there, and they bless Nānak.' So said an ironical person. 66. The thoughts of the saints are very strange, and others do not understand them; therefore the fools, without knowing it, call them bad names. 67. But Nānak had neither joy nor pain, for his attention was ever directed to the unseen one, so though possessing the body he still lived as one without a body, he did not mind the public slander; 68. just as the elephant passes along the road and dogs bark at it; the elephant does not mind the barking of the dogs but steadily walks on; 69. and just as at the sight of the sage Agastī the sea loudly roared, but he was silent and went on with his austerities; 70 in the same way, when public scandal was busy with his name, Nānak sipped the water of the ocean of peace; for he had already broken down the path of lust and anger; such was his strange method of action. 71. Now all the people of his caste went to the Muslim king who was a great villain,

*See Appendix under *Nirgun*.

72. and requested him, 'Nānak has abandoned his own Hindu religion, and has founded a different path altogether, so you please advise him, and get him to follow his own religion.'

NĀNAK'S LETTER TO THE MUSLIM KING

73. When the evil-minded thus requested the Muslim king, the latter trembled with rage and he sent a message to the *math* (monastery) of Nānak telling him to follow his own religion. 74. Nānak did not obey the king, but he composed verses in the *sūkī* metre which he sent to the king. Oh saints and good people, listen to them, for they contain a deep philosophical meaning :

Verse 1. 'No difference can be made among pots as good or bad, for they are made of the same earth. When did Kabir learn the *gāṇatrī mantra*? * And when did Rohidās read the *Purāṇs*? By which of the Vedas was Nāmā (i. e., Nāmdēv) saved? He had recognized *Ātmaram* (i. e., the Rest of the soul.) 2. Dhanpatī and Dhanpāta, and Sena the barber, † and the great sinner Ajāmī ‡ were all saved, the last mentioned simply by thinking of the name Nārāyan. 3. One who acts falsely is false, but he who remembers Hari is true. Nānak is the lowest of the low. Only he who remembers God is true.'

75. (Nānak's letter continued by saying), 'From the same kind of earth small pitchers, large pitchers, and plates are made; if you use your eyes and look into these things there is nothing in them except earth. 76. Similarly, counting Brāhmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shūdras, there are eighteen castes; these are distinguished by different names, but among them there is the same all-pervading image of God, and (to a discerning mind) no duality is seen. 77. A crown, earrings, and bracelets may be different names, but to a discerning eye there is in them only the one element of gold. 78. The seed of

* See Appendix.

† See *Stories of Indian Saints*, II, vol. 10 this Series, chapter 34.

‡ See *Stories of Indian Saints*, II, vol. 10 this Series, page 389.

the banyan tree is very tiny, but from it grow the branches and the leaves; and in the same way, if you notice carefully, you will come to understand that the whole universe is pervaded by Brahm (i. e., the one spiritual essence). 79. Thus the sentence of the Vedas, "The whole universe is composed of Vishnu," is true; I have experienced the truth of this; there is no idea of duality. 80. If you supplicate Shri Hari, this will include all religions; for by merely repeating the name of God, innumerable beings have been saved.' 81. Now as Kabir was by caste a Muslim, he did not at all know the *gāyatrī mantra*; but by the worship of Shri Rāma he perfectly became Brahm (i. e., the all-pervading essence). 82. Rohidas was by caste a shoe-maker, and did not read the *Purāns* or *Shāstras*; but this Vaishnav was saved by the mere singing of God's name. 83. Namā (i. e., Namdev) was by caste a tailor, and was therefore not authorized to study the Vedas; but he was saved by merely singing the praises of Hari; for the *māyā** of Vishnu is unfathomable. 84. The field of Dhanjāta gave crops without sowing the seed, and he practised no other methods except the remembrance of God. 85. Senā the barber was of low caste, but when he was in difficulty Hari assumed Sena's form and served the king. 86. The great sinner Ajāmīl was at the point of death; but when he remembered his child (which was named Nārāyan) he was saved. 87. One who practises bad actions is in truth the worst of all, and no one is higher than he who remembers Shri Hari, day and night.' 88. As the Muslim king saw the letter he was very pleased at heart, but in order to test Nānak he again pretended anger.

NĀNAK DELIVERED, THE MUSLIM REPENTS

89. Said (the Muslim king): 'I am the paramount king, and yet Nānak does not obey me.' So he sent a

* See Appendix under this word.

thousand Pathāns to arrest him. 90. By the orders of the king the royal army quickly arrived in the compound of the *math* (i.e., monastery) with their arms. 91. When the Pathāns were deciding to enter, Nānak knew all about it, and he devised this plan. 92. He thought of the *māyā* of Vishnu and a very strange event took place; for there arrived an army of ten thousand men in arms, 93. who opened their battery and sent forth their arrows without numbers, with the result that the royal army was panic-stricken and ran away pell-mell. 94. Going to the king, the Pathān soldiers told him, ' Suddenly there arrived an army of ten thousand soldiers in the *math* of Nānak, 95. and coming outside the *math*, they gave us a sound beating; and at such a wonderful sight we at once ran away.' 96. As the king heard this, he repented deeply in his heart and said, ' This comes of my listening to the complaint of the evil-minded, and of my persecuting one who is adept in spiritual knowledge.' 97. After saying this the Muslim king tied his hands with his handkerchief and going to Nānak's *math* he made him a low bow in true devotion. 98. Said he, ' I am completely in the wrong in that I have persecuted you. Now, oh chief of the *yogīs*, pardon me and give me your assurance. 99. You may follow the third new path of religion which you have founded.' When he had said this he returned to his palace. 100. As Nānak showed the results of his spiritual accomplishment, his reputation spread widely among the people, and people of all castes went to him and received his *mantra* confidentially (i. e., they became Nānak's disciples).

NANAK'S FAVOURITE DISCIPLES: SUTRĀ AND MARDĀNĀ

101. There were some rich men among Nānak's disciples and they built for Nānak a *math* (a monastery), where many persons were satisfied by the doles of food, for

there was an abundance of provisions. 102. Nānak had a large number of disciples but they were given up to worldly thoughts, and amongst them only two were chosen as brave; listen to their names. 103. One was by the name of Sutrā and the other was Mardānā, both of whom had repentance in their hearts and had abandoned their family lives. 104. Having offered to their *guru* their body, mind and wealth, they were not at all inclined to family life, and their resolve was firm. 105. Understanding the wishes of their *guru*, they were at his service day and night, and procured for him whatever he wished; in this way they acquired his favour. 106. After the lapse of some days Nanak became tired of that way of life, for his spiritual hindrances increased, and so he decided to abandon at once all worldly responsibilities; 107 'or living in a *math* (or monastery) is more difficult than living in a family, and as one tries to lessen the hindrances, they only grow and yield the inevitable results.

NĀNAK GOES TO MECCA WITH MARDANĀ

108. With this thought in mind he at once left that place, leaving Sutrā to manage the *math* and taking Mardānā with him. 109. Nānak thought to himself, 'In Mecca there is an image of Shri Vishnu, and people say that the Muslims have overturned it. 110. So I must go there in person and see the Lord of Vaikunth.' Thus thinking in his mind he marched on quickly. 111. As the *guru* and his disciple were making their way, they came to a river, and when Mardānā saw it was impassable because of the volume of water he felt anxious. 112. Then Nānak walked on the water, exclaiming, '*Alakh Niranjan*' (Oh God!).^{*} The disciple being left far behind he joined his hands palm to palm and pleaded, 113. 'Oh *Swāmī*, please tell me some means of crossing the river; I am very much afraid;

* A name of Brahm called out by *dosaris* when they beg. The word is a corruption of *Alakshya* (incomprehensible).

for I do not know how I should cross the water.' 114. Hearing the earnest plea of his disciple, the *guru* stood in the middle of the stream and said, 'Think in your mind of your *satguru* and then the water will not drown you.' 115. Believing these words of Nānak, Mardānā thought of his *sadguru*, and starting to wade through the water as the water became knee-deep, he reached the middle of the river. 116. Nānak again said, '*Alakh Niranjan*' (Oh God!); and the water at once became only ankle-deep; and the disciple was astonished at the sight. 117. Mardānā said to himself, 'He has given me an ordinary *mantra*, but he himself is repeating something else.' Then he gave up thinking of his *sadguru*, and cried '*Alakh Niranjan*' (Oh God!). 118. Just then the water rose as high as his throat, and with the cry, 'I am drowning, I am drowning,' he called out to his *sadguru*. 119. Nānak looking back, told him to think only of his *sadguru*, and he added, 'Whatever I do, is not possible for you.' 120. Then crying, '*Guru, Guru*,' Mardānā safely reached the other bank. This advice which the *swāmī* gave to his disciple was for the saving of the world. 121. For one should obey his *satguru*; though one must not do as he does. If one follows the words of his *sadguru* with his heart and soul, the fruit of such behaviour is seen at once. 122. Well, both the *guru* and the disciple safely reached the other side of the river, and then the disciple said, 'The *swāmī* has given me very good advice.' 123. By this same means they also crossed the sea and then they arrived on land; and there in Mecca they saw the image of Vishnu which the Muslims had overturned in the *Kali Yuga* (the evil age). 124. In its place a mosque had been built, and Muslim worshippers had been appointed; and if a Hindu mendicant went there they at once killed him. 125. If in spite of the Muslim opposition a *bhakta* of Vishnu tried to go there, he was not permitted, for fear of the image of Shri Vishnu

rising. 126. Going onwards from the district of the river Atak, the sale of uncooked food was not permitted, and wells were built by collecting the bones of beasts. 127. On the banks of brooks and rivers in those parts, bones are planted in the earth in various places at short distances; and no other food except cooked food could be had. 128. In all this could be seen the influence of the Muslims; but in spite of that Nānak went there. People may doubt this, but note how he went. 129. The action of an expert in spiritual knowledge is beyond ordinary understanding; for he goes invisibly, without being noticed by the people: Nanak was therefore able to enter Mecca, and to appear there all unnoticed. 130. The *Mujāvars* (i.e. worshippers) who were appointed at the mosque, when they saw Nānak there, were very much astonished and said, 'Tell us who you are, and where are you from?'

NĀNAK'S MESSAGE AND PRAYER

131. Nānak replied, 'I am the cause of the creation and of its support and destruction, and I have come here as the spiritual light. 132. Please know that I am the one who is the Doer, and at the same time I am the Non-Doer, one beyond three qualities and beyond *māyā*; hence I have suddenly come here. 133. The imperishable Spirit of God pervades everything and is beyond *māyā*. I am the same spirit descended as an *avatār* in this mortal world for the benefit of the people. 134. God is without attributes and without form, but He descends as an *avatār* for the sake of His *bhaktas*. Regard me therefore as that voluntary actor without any attribute.' 135. Hearing him the worshippers said, 'You talk very highly, but only if you give us some proof can we consider what you say as true. 136. Here there was an idol of the Hindus, the image of Vishnu; but the Muslim king turned it upside down and built a mosque in

its place. 137. You call yourself the cause of all things, then put this image right ; only then can we consider what you say as true ;' so the worshippers said. 138. As Nānak heard this he began to praise the image of Vishnu. ' Victory to Thee, the dweller on the sea, the Husband of Shri Lakshmi : Thou alone dost pervade the three worlds. 139. Victory, Victory to Thee, the Supreme God as Hari (Vishnu) and as Hara (Shiva), the Father of the Creator, the Saviour of the lowly, without Thee the moveable and the immoveable have no place of refuge. 140. In every pore of Thy body there are universes without number ; so extensive is Thy form, that in order to fulfil the wishes of Thy *bhaktas* Thou dost assume a *sagun* form. 141. Thy power alone is the cause of the creation, the support and destruction of the world ; yet in regard to the *Kali* (evil age) and *Kāla* (death) Thou hidest Thyself from fear of the Muslim. 142. Oh Thou Saviour of the lowly, when Thou seest the unbelievers Thou dost turn away from them. Now listen to my pleading, and give me a vision of Thee at once, oh Saviour of the lowly.' 143. At this praise of Nānak the image of Shri Vishnu raised itself and sat up. The dark-complexioned Shripati was beautiful and tender, and in his hands were the shell and disc. 144. Nānak then offered mental worship in all its points to Shri Hari and departed thence. 145. Seeing that wonderful sight the Muslims (or worshippers) fell themselves prostrate before Nānak and said, ' If the king knows of this he will kill us. 146. He will say, " Some Hindu came here, and so the image is standing upright ; " and he will then harass our very life.' After saying this they fell at his feet, adding, 147. ' You are God, existing in the soul of all, and you have descended on this earth as a human being ; this we believe as true, but listen to our request : 148. Make the image just as it was before, so that we may be saved from all trouble.' Having said this the Muslim worshippers

fell at his feet. 149. Nānak did not oppose them, but stated, 'God's will is the true authority.' Then he prayed to God, 'Please be as before. 150. In future Thou hast to come as the *Kālī aṁṁār* to destroy the *Mlenchhas* (or the Muslims); and Thou hast to steady (the Hindu) religion and protect Thy *bhaktas*. 151. Now turn Thy back on the impious Muslims and be as before.' Hearing the request of Nānak, the image of Vishnu at once slept as hitherto. 152. After performing this wonder there, the chief of the *yogīs* departed from there, and traversing the land he then crossed the sea.

NĀNAK TAKES A KING ACROSS A RIVER
IN A PAPER-BOAT

153. As he was journeying he came to a river in flood where a king was shut up with his army. 154. As the king saw Nānak *Śrāmī*, he grasped his feet firmly and with true devotion. Nānak then made a ship of paper, and enabled him thereby to cross the water. 155. When the king arrived on the other side at once with his army, he requested Nānak to give him a vision of God. 156. The chief of the *yogīs* addressing the king said, 'Know that He is without qualities, without form, and without the three *gunas* (*saṭva*, *raja*, and *tama*) * and that He is the Lord of all. 157. The supreme *Brahm* is neither white nor black, neither darkish nor yellow, neither red nor white. He is beyond the seven colours and beyond any hindrance. 158. He whose power enables the hands and feet to work, and who gives life to the lifeless, know Him as Shridhar. 159. Through His power the eyes see, and the ears hear. Recognize Him in your mind. Why do you feel concerned? 160. Through His power the nose detects odour, and the tongue knows what is palatable. Know in yourself the God of gods, the one

* On these terms see the Appendix under *guna*.

dark as a cloud. 161. Aside from Him, no one has power either over the human body or over the universe. "Know yourself:" there is no other *mantra* better than that. 162. Hearing these words of Nānak, the king made him a low bow with true devotion and said, 'The words of the *swāmī* have made an impression on my mind.' 163. The king then went to his capital, and Nānak in company with Mardānā continued his journey.

NĀNAK AND GORAKSHANĀTH MEET

164. That crest-jewel of the *yogīs*, who is supposed to be the *avatār* of Vishnu, Gorakshanāth, was suddenly seen. 165. Nānak accosted him by crying 'Ādesh' (i. e., What is your command?). Then the son of Matsyendra said to him, 'You have shown the power of your accomplishment in the world, now do as I request you. 166. At Hardwār four hundred thousand pilgrims have assembled; give them a dinner at once and then only will you be a true chief of the *yogīs*.' 167. Hearing the words of Gorakshanāth, Nānak said to him, 'By all means. You go ahead of me and give the invitations.' 168. So in order to test Nānak's power, Gorakshanāth went to Hardwār and there Nānak performed a wonderful thing; listen to it, oh pious *bhaktas*. 169. At Hardwār there had assembled four hundred thousand pilgrims and Nānak went there invisibly and satisfied all of them. 170. All the accomplishments were favourable to him, therefore he gave them all the meal they desired. Gorakshanāth then came behind him and gave the invitations. 171. The people told him, 'Oh Gorakshanāth, Nānak came here quite recently, and gave to all of us the desired meal, and he has now gone to visit the sacred places.' 172. As the son of Matsyendra heard these words, he wondered very much, and at the same time Nānak appeared there and made a *namaskār* to Gorakshanāth. 173. They embraced each other with love and

Gorakshanāth praised Nānak exceedingly, saying, 'I do not see any other expert in spiritual knowledge like you even in the three worlds. 174. The sign of your absorption into the deity, and the tokens of the chief of the *yogīs*, are seen on you as so many ornaments; I know this for certain.' 175. Gorakshanāth praised Nānak in this way, and then fled away into the sky; but Nānak returned with his disciple to his *math* (monastery). 176. Just as the *līlā* (i. e., the creative acts) of God are unfathomable, so also the *yogi* possessed the same powers; he exhibited the power of his accomplishments, and punished the evil-minded. 177. Whoever shows some wonderful event, be he a *bhakta* of God or the chief of the *yogīs*, his reputation spreads widely and others continue the history of his sect. 178. Hence in that country there are many *burāgīs* belonging to the sect of Nānak, who give the *mantra* to the people and make the dull and ignorant remember God.

POWER OF THE STORIES OF THE SAINTS

179. If one listens to the lives of the saints, his greatest sins are burnt away; the giver of salvation is pleased with him, and keeps him in the world of Vaikunth. 180. The merciful to the lowly, the mine of mercy, the Husband of Rukmini, who is imperishable and everlasting, He resides in the heart of Mahipati and makes him narrate the lives of the saints.

181. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shrī Bhakta'līlāmrit*. By merely listening to it one's longings are fulfilled. May the loving and pious *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the eleventh delightful chapter. It is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER XII

THE STORY OF ROHIDĀS

INVOCATION

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Ignorant as I am, how can I describe the extensive one who is truth, knowledge and joy? His forms are countless. His extent is not known even to the serpent Shesha. 2. The streams of water which the clouds pour on the earth cannot be counted; the sprouts of grass which come out of the earth cannot be enumerated; 3. the waves of the ocean come and go without ceasing day and night, and no one on earth is able to count them; 4. nor can anyone use his hand in measuring the sky; so also the forms of God are without number. 5. Those who either through devotion or enmity enjoyed the company of the good, became themselves righteous and received the *Sāyujja* salvation (i. e., absorption into the deity).

VISHNU-BHAKTA ROHIDĀS & RAMA-BHAKTA KABIR

6. In the last chapter it was related that Nānak went to Mecca where he beheld the image of Shri Vishnu, and then met Gorakshanāth. 7. Another delightful story—listen to it, O pious ones—is concerning Rohidās who was a perfect Vaishnav and worshipped Vishnu. 8. Bringing the Lord of Vaikunth into his contemplation, he made an image of skin, so that the image of Shripati had four arms and was beautiful to look at; these four arms were ornamented with shell and disc. 9. The face was smiling and attractive, and at the sight of it one forgot all bodily consciousness. Rohidās always worshipped this household idol with all the materials of worship. 10. In front of the image of Gopāl there was the collection of five gods of Shāligrām, namely, Ganpati, Shiva, Hari, the Sun and

the Shakti goddess, which Rohidās had arranged in love. 11. He worshipped this collection of five deities, but called himself the worshipper of Krishna, and his devotion to Vishnu became known to Kabīr. 12. He was a loving worshipper of Rāma, righteous and indifferent to worldly things, and had made all his senses subservient to himself by the power of repentance. 13. The *Chālak** bird does not drink water from the earth, and an infant child is not pacified without its mother; to the *Chakor** bird the moon is the sole authority, and apart from the moon the *Chakor* bird does not know anything else; 14. so in the same way Kabīr enjoyed only the worship of Rāma; though there were many other deities, he did not even look at them. 15. Such was Kabir, endowed with complete knowledge. He had previously heard of the *bhaktu* Rohidās and so one day he went suddenly to meet him. 16. He had in his company two other *barrāgīs*, both of them *bhaktas* of Vishnu who as they saw the image of Gopāl bowed to it in true devotion. 17. The *bhaktu* Kabir witnessed their worship with his own eyes, and when he went and sat near him he was astonished. 18. Rohidās saw this and he said, 'Why should you entertain pride when you come to the temple of Hari? 19. You have before you the *sagun* image of the one who is merciful to his *bhaktas*, the Sporter in Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu); you did not bow to it and still you call yourself a noble Vaishnav.'

CONTROVERSY BETWEEN ROHIDĀS AND KABĪR

20. Kabīr replied, 'I will not see any other deity besides Shri Rāma; for such a course I have the command of my *guru* as my authority. 21. You have made an image of skin, stuffed with cotton; how can anyone bow down to that?' 22. Hearing this remark of Kabīr, Rohidās said

* On these two birds see Appendix.

to him, 'Do you see *anything* without skin? 23. The human body is composed of five great elements, and it is covered with skin; then how do you call in question the image of Gopāl? Your opinion is contrary to the truth. 24. All the three kinds of animals, viz., those born of an egg, those born sexually, and those coming from the earth, are all enveloped in skin; in them all, *Chakrapāṇi* (i. e., Vishnu) is the Lord of life; for he pervades all these, and yet is different from them. 25. The musical instruments such as *Kahala*, *Dhol* and *Mṛdaṅg* are covered with skin and the all-pervading spirit in sound is praised in the *śhāstras*. 26. The elephant made of skin is beautiful to look at, but he looks more beautiful with garments and adornments; and upon the elephant sits the king who himself is also made of skin, and with eyes of skin he looks all around him. 27. The dark-complexioned cow is covered with skin, yet her milk is considered pure; the men who milk the cow are also made of skin and the tongue with which they drink the milk is made of skin. 28. You *Paushpats* are all-knowing; think over this matter well. Gopāl Krishna pervades the temple of skin (i. e., the body) but is different from it.' 29. When Kabīr heard this speech of Rohidās, he replied contemptuously, 'Shrī Rāma is the life of the world, so the *Purāṇs* loudly proclaim. 30. Your Krishna belongs to the *Drāpār* age; he was a cowherd at the house of Nand; he was tied with ropes by the milkmaids, and you are describing his exploits. 31. My Rāma was born in the Solar race, born of Dashrath who was the overlord and dwelt in Ayodhyā, and he was dear to the sage Sanak and others.' 32. Rohidās said in reply, 'I have heard the reputation of Rāma; he ran after an illusory antelope, and thus lost his wife Sitā. 33. On account of the separation from his wife, he went from forest to forest weeping; he embraced trees and stones; such is your Raghu-

nandan (i. e., Rāma).’ 34. Kabir answered and said, ‘Your Krishna was tied down to a mortar and Vanamālī (i. e., Krishna) then sobbed near his mother. 35. My Shri Rāma is the image of the supreme Brahm; when he saw the loving devotion of Sītā he went in search of her into the forests and thus increased His fame.’ 36. Rohidās replied, ‘O you Muslim! You say that Raghunandan was a paramount king! Then why did he collect an army of monkeys and roam through the forests? 37. My Shri Krishna is the image of the supreme Brahm; he saw the loving devotion of Yashodā, and therefore Shripati (i. e., Krishna) got himself bound in order to show the power of his *avalār*. 38. He is the controller of *Kāl* (the evil age) and *Kāla* (death); when Indra poured water from the clouds in torrents, he held the Govardhan mountain on the tip of his finger nail and thus protected the inhabitants of Vraja.’ 39. To this Kabir answered, ‘If Krishna is not afraid of *Kāl* and *Kāla* then why did he run before the *Kālayām*?’ 40. You speak of his reputation for his having held the Govardhan mountain which is only like an ant-hill; now listen to the intense fame of Shri Rāma. 41. Raghunath had great mountains brought by the hands of monkeys and had a bridge built over the ocean. Your Krishna himself lifted up the Govardhan mountain; of what account is your singing his praise?’ 42. This discussion between the two was listened to by the gods, the sky was crowded with chariots, and the celestial singers shouted out the names of God. 43. The devotion, knowledge and indifference to worldly things of both of them were equal; both of them were devoted to one deity only, and their minds never deviated. 44. Just as the sun and the moon unite in the sky, and just as the forms of Hari (i. e., Vishnu) and Hara (i. e., Shiva) are different, yet both

* See under this word in *Stories of Indian Saints*, vol. 2, p. 395, and under Muchakund, p. 409.

in fact are alike; 45. just as the moon possesses coolness and the sun is endowed with heat; and just as Shiva is possessed of indifference to worldly things, while Shri Hari is the enjoyer of sports; 46. and on account of their different ways of life, they appear different to different people; so also the way of worship by Rohidās was not liked by Kabīr.

QUALITIES AND DEFECTS OF RIVAL DEITIES

47. May the pious ones listen with reverence to the thread of the narrative. Kabīr said to Rohidās, 'My Raghunandan (i. e., Rāma) is superior to all. 48. When Shankar (i. e., Shiva) swallowed the deadly poison *Hūāhala* all his body began to burn; but as he uttered the name of Rāma, Dhūrjati (i. e., Shiva) became cool. 49. Vālhā was a great sinner, but as he repeated "*Marū, Marū*" his fame spread all over the world, and his love could not be contained in the three worlds. 50. Innumerable are the ignorant people on earth who have been saved by the mere name of Rāma.' Hearing this Rohidās said in reply, 51. 'As Raghunāth (i. e., Rāma) went to the forest, Dashrath died of lamentation by which he went to hell; so people say. 52. He who gives pain to his father what can he do for others?' Hearing this, Kabīr flew into a rage, for he could not bear the censure of Rāma. 53. Said he, 'O ignorant shoemaker, you blame Raghunandan! I know the cunning Krishna whom you worship. 54. There was a celestial voice stating that from the womb of Devakī, Krishna would come as the eighth *avatār* and that he would kill the demons. 55. When Kansa * heard of this, great fear arose in his mind, and he put into prison both Vasudev and Devakī (i.e., Krishna's parents). 56. Thus on account of your Krishna, Vasudev

* On the names in this section see Appendices I and II in *Stories of Indian Saints*, II, vol. 10 in this series.

and Devakī had to suffer imprisonment, which means he gave no happiness to his father and mother. 57. Thus was *Chakrapāṇi* (i. e., Krishna) when his mother was in a prison ; then through fear of Kansa he ran to Gokul. 58. Your Krishna was a thief and an adulterer ; he stole such things as anklets, and as (the demoness) Putanā was nursing him he killed her. 59. He describes himself as the perfect *avatār* (of Vishnu), but in his childhood he killed a woman. Are you not ashamed to proclaim his greatness in the world ?' 60. Said Rohidās, ' Raghunandan (i. e., Rāma) deformed Shūrpanakhā and killed Tātakā ; do you not remember that ? 61. Rāma was born in the Solar line, therefore how did he kill a woman ?' Hearing this question of Rohidās, Kabīr replied, 62. ' You shoemaker, hear me. Your Krishna was a thief and an adulterer ; even in his childhood he had excessive sexual intercourse throughout Gokul. 63. He entered the houses of the cowherdresses and ate curds and milk by stealth. He was tied down by the milkmaids and complaints against him were carried to his mother. 64. Your Krishna is in truth disgraceful, yet without any sense of shame ; becoming an *avatār* as Krishna, he created confusion of castes. 65. Vālmik has described the qualities of Raghunandan in his *Rāma avatār*. He had only one wife and one arrow ; 66. in his kingdom, old age and death and poverty were nowhere to be seen ; the fame of my Rāma, the dweller in Ayodhyā, goes beyond the boundaries of the three worlds.' 67. The *bhakta* Kabir sat silent for some time and then said to Rohidās, ' Why do you not give me a reply ? 68. While questions and answers are going on between us, why are you silent ?' The Lord of Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu) knowing what was going on, gave this order to Gajavadan (i. e., Ganpati) : 69. ' O Ganpati, hear me. Kabīr and Rohidās are both my *bhaktas*, but through pride concerning

their respective deities they are quarrelling between themselves; 70. therefore go there at once and give them your decision, and bring about friendship between them and then come back to me at once.' 71. As the Lord of Vaikunth thus ordered Ganpati, the son of Pārvati said, 'Surely.' Then he went at once to the house of Rohidās and manifested himself there.

MANY GODS COME TO INTERVENE

72. Gajavadan, who is Lambodar (both being epithets of Ganpati), with his four arms rode a mouse. His single white tusk looked beautiful and all his body was painted red with red lead. 73. When he appeared there in this form, he listened to the quarrel going on. Gajavadan then took the side of Rohidās and said, 74. 'I consider the worship of Krishna as proper.' Then Kabir contemptuously replied, 'But who asked you to decide?' 75. You go and ride your mouse with your big belly and get away from here at once; we noble Vaishnavs are undaunted; we will not listen to your decision. 76. The vacillating Rohidās worships you among the collection of his five deities; therefore you speak in his favour. 77. For a bribe you give evidence for him; this is in no way proper; so go back the way you came. I have no *modak* (i. e., dainty food which Ganpati very much likes) to give you.' 78. Hearing the words of Kabir, Gajavadan became silent and said to himself, 'Who is able to oppose him in debate, for he talks of my weaknesses?' 79. Seeing this, the sporter in Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu) commanded the Sun, 'You go and decide between them.' 80. As the Husband of Lakshmi commanded the Sun, he appeared as a Brāhman and said, 'I think the devotion of Rohidās is superior to yours.' 81. Kabir replied, 'O you with a thousand rays (i. e., the Sun), why have you come here? In your mind there is duality; go back at once. 82. Though you shine

for ever on all alike your mind is sly ; this I know for certain. 83. No doubt the Moon is cool but his body is not without a spot ; like him, O Sun, though you throw a clear light, yet your mind possesses duality. 84. O Sun, my Raghupati (i. e., Rāma) is born in your own family line. Such being the case, you are setting aside his devotion by singing the fame of the cowherd (i. e., Krishna).' 85. Hearing this speech of Kabīr, the Sun remained silent and did not know what answer to make. 86. Then from Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu's heaven) the Husband of Lakshmi ordered *Devī* (the goddess Lakshmi), ' You go at once and satisfy both of them.' 87. Then Ambā (the primal mother) rode a lion, and appearing at the house of Rohidās listened to the discussion between them. 88. She took the side of the servant of Krishna and then gave her decision saying, ' Rohidas is very knowing and he has concentrated his mind upon the supreme Brahm.' 89. Hearing the decision of the Mayā (the primal mother), Kabir said, ' Get away from here. We are brave and noble Vaishnavs and we will not listen to your decision. 90. You wish for red lead, sweetmeats and victims ; this will not do with me ; you take victims of goats, O Kālī.' 91. As the *bhakta* of Shri Rāma thus spoke, the goddess remained silent and was at a loss to know what reply to make. 92. Understanding this the God of gods sent Shiva as the intermediary, saying, ' It is very strange that the Vaishnavs, Kabīr and Rohidās, should quarrel like this. 93. One is a complete *bhakta* of Rāma, while the other is a devotee of Krishna. Their quarrel has reached its height ; therefore go quickly and satisfy them.' 94. Shūlapānī (i. e., Shankar or Shiva) said, ' Surely.' Then he arrived at the house of Rohidās and was seen with his ten arms and five faces. 95. Kabir was just saying, ' Raghupati (i. e., Rāma) is superior to all,' and just as Rohidās was worshipping the image of Gopāl (i. e., Krishna); the Lord

of Kailās (i. e., Shiva) on seeing it, spoke as follows: 96. ' Nārāyan, the inhabitant of Vaikunth, sends me here so that I may stop the quarrel between you two and effect a reunion.' 97. The Lord of Kailās (Shiva) said, ' I have with love thought over your quarrel, and I think the devotion of Rohidās is real.' 98. Then Kabir angrily replied, ' O Shankar (i. e., Shiva), you have renounced the world in order to eat green tobacco to your satisfaction. 99. You eat the fruit of *Dhattur* (i. e., an intoxicating fruit) day and night and you sport in the cemetery; you are altogether ignorant of devotion and worship. 100. Long ago you swallowed the deadly poison *Hālāhala*; but you became quiet by the power of the name of Rāma; you do not remember this at all, and so you talk at random. 101. Rohidās arranges in his house the collection of five deities. It is on account of his bribe that you speak for him, O Shankar (i. e., Shiva).' 102. As the *bhakta* Kabir said this, the gods listened to him in their celestial chariots and with a cry of ' Victory! Victory!' they laughed uproariously. 103. As *Puṁkṣpāni* (i. e., Shiva) heard the words of Kabir, he became silent and said, ' In all the three worlds there was none who could oppose me. 104. My mind witnesses that I am also a worshipper of Rāma but I do not know how I talked at random in the course of talking. 105. The *bhakta* Kabir took advantage of that weakness of mine and has struck me with a weapon in the form of words, so I do not find suitable words to make reply.' 106. After saying this Dhūrjati (i. e., Shiva) remained silent, and listened to the discussion between Kabir and Rohidās. 107. One of them affirmed that Shri Rāma alone was superior to all gods, and that he alone should be worshipped; while the other said that Krishna was the *avatār* of God and that he alone should be worshipped. 108. Both the noble Vaishnavs were obstinate, and they appeared like the two mountains

Meru and Mandār, or like the Moon and the Sun. 109. One appears like the serpent Vāsukī who has taken on his head the burden of the earth, and the other appears able enough like the serpent to support the weight of the earth. 110. One is like Shukra (the *guru* of the demons) and the other is like the Guru (Jupiter, *Guru* of the gods). Both are revered by the gods and the demons, and these are equally proud of them both, for both of them are equal in learning. 111. In the same way Kabir and Rohidās are equal in regard to their devotion, knowledge and indifference to worldly things ; but the object of their worship differs, and this is the cause of their quarrel. 112. One of them is like Narad, while the other is like Tumbar ; both of them devotedly sing the praises of God, one being like the eagle (i. e., Vishnu's vehicle) and the other like the great monkey, Māruti. 113. Neither of them likes the opinion of the other ; therefore, the Life of the world, Shri Hari, the attractor of the mind, has fallen into difficulty.

VISHNU RECONCILES THEM

114. Said Vishnu, ' I sent great gods as intermediaries but nothing has been accomplished. Therefore, now I must go there in person, and bring about union between them. 115. An axe, scissors, and a bad man, where these act as the medium, destruction is sure, and they become the cause of calamity. 116. A needle, borax and a good man, where these act as the medium, no duality remains there, as these bring both the parties together. 117. I am the soul of the universe and the life of the world ; I am subject to my *bhaktas* and I show them myself and bring about friendship between them.' 118. After saying this, *Shārangdhar* (i. e., Vishnu) rode his eagle. He was beautiful and tender and with lotus eyes, and his face was charming. 119. The image had four arms and was of a

beautiful cast. The shell, disc and other weapons were in his hand and the divine crocodile earrings shone in His ears. 120. In this way *Chakrapāni* (i. e., Vishnu) arrived at the house of Rohidās, and the gods at that time poured on him blue lotuses. 121. In order to honour Kabīr, He himself became Raghunandan (i. e., Rāma) with a bow and arrow ; the form was tender and beautiful to look at. 122. As Kabīr opened his eyes he saw before him the image of his worship; the eight affections of the body overpowered him and he embraced the Husband of Sitā (i. e., Rāma). 123. Seeing the lotus feet of Shri Rāma, Kabīr rolled himself on them and said, ' All my longings have borne fruit. Blessed is this day. ' 124. As he beheld Shri Rāma his eyelids forgot to touch each other, and as he was gazing transfixed, a wonderful event took place. O pious *bhaktas*, listen to it. 125. As Kabīr was looking on, Shri Raghunāth (i. e., Rāma) changed his form : his bow and arrow disappeared and he was playing the pipe. 126. His crown also disappeared, and on his head instead were seen peacock feathers; he was playing the pipe standing on one foot and on the inward-curving toes of the other; and Kabīr looked steadfastly at Him. 127. As Rohidās looked at the form he at once came and fell at his feet and said, ' Blessed is this day; for I have met *Hrishīkeshi* (i. e., Vishnu). ' 128. He then clasped both Kabīr and Rohidās to his lotus breast and said, ' Give up all sense of duality and be closely intimate with each other. 129. By the two different *avatārs*, Rāma and Krishna, two different actions were played; but the essential principle was the same and without any difference. 130. Bring to your mind Aparnā and Pārvatī (i. e., Shiva's wife), and Nilkanth and the Lord of Kailās (i. e., Shiva), these are known by two different names; so also are Raghupati and Krishna; but although they are two in name, they are really one. 131. Just as Garud and

the lord of birds, or as the sea and the mine of jems (i. e., the sea) are different in names ; in the same way Krishna and Rāmchandra are different in names, but know that they are truly one. 132. Just as Indra and Ākhandala are the same, or as the sacred water is composed of ordinary water, so in the same way Rāmchandra and Gopāl (i. e., Krishna) are one in form.’ 133. As the Recliner on Shesha (i. e., Vishnu) thus spoke Kabīr fell at His feet ; and whatever sense of duality was in him previously, had now entirely gone. 134. Seeing this wonderful sight, the gods went to their places ; and the Recliner on the serpent Shesha disappeared in the heart of his *bhakta*. 135. The Pervader of the world for ever lives in the heart of his *bhaktas*. Kabīr and Rohidās then said, ‘Blessed is this day. 136. On account of our discussion the *Sacāmī* (i. e., Vishnu) came thus far ; and therefore we had a clear sight of the Life of the world.’ 137. Having said this, Rohidās fell at the feet of Kabīr, and the latter at once embraced him.

KABIR RETURNS TO BENARES

138. Rohidās then had the cooking done, and he gave a dinner to Kabīr the saint, and after dinner (Rohidās) gave him with love a leaf of *tulsī* to clean his mouth. 139. Then taking leave of Rohidās, Kabīr went on his way to Vārānasi (i. e., Benares). He held in his mind the form of Rūna and thus experienced the joy of love. 140. At the time of his departure Kabīr told Rohidās, ‘ Do not worship the four deities along with the Shāligrām.’ 141. Do not worship the Narmadyā Ganpati (i. e., red stones found in the Nerbudda river), the *bāna* (i. e., Shiva), Shakti (the goddess) and the Sun ; for the thing will be followed in future. 142. The worship of other deities than that of Vishnu is a deviation in devotion ; this I had heard indirectly, and therefore I came to

you at once. 143. So now be careful, and do not worship any other deity except Vishnu.' 'Surely,' said Rohidās, and fell at his feet. 144. In that country until this day the Vaishnavs worship the *shāligrām*; their devotion is directed to one deity only, and so their mind is not led astray. 145. Well, Kabir went to Vārānaśi (i. e., Benares) and Rohidās returned home, and the image of Shri Vishnu lived in his mind for ever.

PREVIOUS BIRTH OF ROHIDĀS DESCRIBED

146. Then the listeners felt doubtful and asked the speaker, 'What austerities had the shoemaker performed, to obtain a direct manifestation of God? 147. Explain to us all the history of his former births. Why was the noble Vaishnav born in a low caste?' 148. Hearing this question by the good people, the speaker joyfully replied, 'There was the chief of the *yogīs*, Rāmanand Swami. 149. Amongst his followers there was a Brahman youth, a celibate, who was given the service of begging flour from house to house. 150. The food got by begging is according to the *shāstras* a sacred food; even if the seeker after spiritual riches eats it to his fill, still he is supposed to have observed a fast. 151. If any one person gives the whole portion of food, it must not be accepted.' The *sad-guru* had instructed the Brahman in that way and he acted accordingly. 152. From every house he had a pinchful of flour, and with that flour he did the cooking. As Rāmanand felt hungry he brought into his mind the Lord of the world. 153. He performed his mental worship, and then offered the food to God, and ate what remained as a favour, and then only did his mind feel satisfied. 154. In this way many days rolled on, when there was a sudden hindrance, for as the Brāhman celibate once went to beg in the town, it rained very heavily. 155. Standing under the eaves of a grocer's shop, he thought he would not

be able to go and beg, and therefore felt much concerned. 156. The grocer said, 'This noble Brāhman is standing here for four *ghatikās* ;' so he gave him provisions enough for two. 157. The Brāhman celibate took them and returned to the *nath* (hermitage), and doing the cooking he served the offering on a plate. 158. Rāmānand then offered his mental worship but Shri Hari would not eat the offering ; so he asked the disciple if he had practised any artifice. 159. As the food contained food not sacred the Lord of Pandharī did not dine. The Brāhman celibate became frightened and he explained the whole thing in detail : 160. 'To-day it was raining very heavily, so I could not beg from door to door, and when a grocer saw me he gave me some provisions. 161. I cooked them, and the offering is truly of that.' Hearing this explanation of the celibate, Rāmānand cursed him, 162. saying, 'Without informing me you accepted the food from the grocer ; therefore, you will be born in the family of a shoemaker ; my words are sure to come to pass.' 163. The Brahman celibate then fell at his feet and requested a commutation of the curse, to which the *sadguru* answered, 'You will become a *bhakta* of Vishnu. 164. Being pleased with your devotion, Shri Hari will give you His manifestation ; and the path of devotion will be improved by you.' 165. As Rāmānand said this the Brāhman celibate fell at his feet. After some days he was attacked by a fever lasting for nine days. 166. Shortly before that some one had given him a pair of shoes, and he had kept them in a niche in front of him which he looked at often. 167. He had never worn shoes, and he had a great longing to wear them. As the disease became unbearable he died, but he remembered Shri Hari then. 168. Strange is the way of fate, for he was born in the family of a shoemaker after the full period of nine months had been completed. 169. Although the mother herself urged him to suck the breast he

would not do it ; and the disciples of Rāmānand gave him the news, 170. saying, 'The Brāhman celibate whom you cursed has been born in the family of a shoemaker ; but he does not suck his mother's breast, therefore please come as far as his house.' 171. The lord of the *Yatīs* (i. e., *sannyāsīs*) stood on the outside of the shoemaker's house and having brought out the child, spoke to it as follows:

ROHIDĀS AS A SHOEMAKER

172. 'Whatever birth you have got, in accordance with your fate, consider it as the best, and worship Shri Hari.' 173. At this command the child showed a smiling face, and as the mother took it in her lap, it at once began to suck her breast. 174. In this way he fell from the practice of *yoga*, and gradually grew and took to his calling, but he did not like anything impure. 175. He had a separate hut, which he kept clean by coating it with cowdung ; there was an altar of *tulsi* in the yard which was kept bright by sprinkling on it water and coating it with cowdung. 176. Before a bath he did not even drink water ; he always repeated the names of God and worshipped the saints and good men. 177. If any Vaishnavs came to his house, he gave them provisions of food and pots for cooking, and made them dine at his house. 178. He bought ready-coloured leather, and cobbled the shoes of the pilgrims ; and as a matter of obligation he gave new shoes to some. 179. While he was passing his days indifferent to worldly things, he saw some pilgrims going to *Kāshī* (i. e., Benares), and a Vaishnav *barāgi* came to the house of Rohidās. 180. Said he, 'Take half a pice and cobbler my shoes.' However, Rohidās would not take anything but he said, 'I only wish your favour. 181. As you are going to *Kāshī* (i. e., Benares) give my *namiskārs* to the Bhāgirathi (river).' The noble Vaishnav then gave him half a copper, 182. and remarked, 'The Bhāgirathi

is the mistress of all sacred waters, for her source is at the feet of Shri Vishnu. Give this leaf of *tulsī* (half copper) to her, and bring some favour from there.' 183. 'Surely,' was his reply.

THE GANGES SENDS ROHIDAS A BRACELET OF GOLD

Then the pilgrim went to *Kāshī* (i. e., Benares), and as he was bathing in the Bhāgīrathī, he thought of the message of Rohidās. 184. When he put the half copper into the water, the daughter of Vishnu (i. e., the Bhāgīrathī river) put out her hand. She took the gift in her hand with love, and giving a bracelet as a favour, 185. she said, 'Rohidās is a *bhakta* of Vishnu whom he remembers; give this to him.' As the sound emanated from the water, the pilgrim was astonished in mind. 186. The jewelled bracelet was set in gold as if it had been made by the four-faced God (the Creator). The pilgrim took it and brought it to Rohidās. 187. He said, 'Seeing your devotion, the Bhāgīrathī was pleased; with love she accepted the half copper, and has sent this favour by my hand.' 188. When Rohidās saw it he said, 'Why has she sent this hindrance to me? I am satisfied by the river's water.' Then he worshipped the bracelet with his other deities. 189. At night it shone like a burning lamp; but Rohidās had not thought of turning it to his own advantage until a band of Vaishnavs arrived at his house. 190. He had no money in his house to give them provisions of food. Then he took the bracelet to the market to turn it into money. 191. Amongst all the castes the goldsmith is the most cunning of all; none should trust him in either body, speech or mind. 192. Rohidās was a simple Vaishnav, and he gave the invaluable bracelet to the goldsmith, asking in return as much money as was needed to buy provisions for the saints. 193. When the Vaishnavs were satisfied he was pleased at heart and said, 'The

favour sent by the mother (i. e., the Bhāgīrathī river) was spent in a good cause.' 194. As he said this, the goldsmith (who heard it) was most evil-minded, and he carried a complaint to the royal court, thus creating a hindrance for Rohidās.

ROHIDĀS PERFORMS A MIRACLE

195. The officer there was a Muslim and the evil-minded (goldsmith) showed the bracelet to him, saying, ' Rohidās gave this to me, so you demand the other.' 196. At this evil advice the Muslim got angry, and so he sent for Rohidās and asked him to submit the other. 197. The servant of Vishnu replied, ' Amongst all the sacred waters the Bhāgīrathī is the highest. She has sent this as a favour to me by the hand of a pilgrim. 198. To my house there came some saints, and I had no provisions for them in my house, so I sold it to this goldsmith; this is the truth. 199. Had I another bracelet like that, I would at once have given it to you.' This he told the officer repeatedly, but he would not trust him. 200. He said, ' Bring me the other like this, or else you will be punished.' The Vaishnav was in difficulty and he thus addressed the king, 201. ' Do me the favour of going with me as far as my house. I shall there request the Bhāgīrathī, and show you the other bracelet. 202. If that should happen to complete the pair, then you take it at once. But if the Bhāgīrathī takes even this away, I am not to be blamed.' 203. ' By all means,' he answered, and the king accompanied him to his house. Then Rohidās pleaded with the daughter of Vishnu (i. e., the Bhāgīrathī) in various ways: 204. ' Oh mother, the mistress of all the sacred waters, give me a sight of thee at once.' After saying this, he began to weep loudly, and a wonderful event then occurred. 205. As he remembered the feet of Shri Vishnu, the Bhāgīrathī appeared in the kneading pan; and as the king saw the pure water, he was astonished at heart. 206.

From the water came out a hand with a bracelet, and when the king compared it with the other bracelet, an astonishing event took place. 207. The bracelet which was in the king's hand flew of itself and sat around the wrist of the Bhāgirathī. The king sat there gazing. 208. The Bhāgirathī having shown this amazing performance, it became invisible and the king ran and clasped (Rohidās) by his feet, and said, ' I troubled you for nothing.'

209. The saints listen to my uncouth words with reverence. I myself do not know either what is lacking or what more is needed. Shri Hari, the Husband of Rukmini, knows it. 210. It is Thou who dost enlighten my intellect and emotion, and who hast made the book so large ; Mahipati is only a mere instrument.

211. *Swāsti* (Peace) ! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktatīlāmrit*. By merely listening to it the longings of one's heart are fulfilled. May the loving and pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the twelfth delightful chapter.

For Chapters XIII—XXIV
of the
Bhaktalīlāmrit,
which contain Mahipati's biography of Eknāth,
see volume 2 in this 'Poet Saints of Mahārāshtra' Series
*entitled **EKNĀTH,** 295 pages.*

Published in 1927

For Chapters XXV—XL
of the
B h a k t a l ī l ā m r i t,
which contain Mahāpatī's biography of Tukārām,
see volume 7 in this 'Poet Saints of Mahārāshtra' Series,
*entitled **T U K Ā R Ā M,** 346 pages.*
Published in 1930

CHAPTER XLI

KESHAV SWĀMĪ; BĀJĪD PATHĀN;
SANTOBĀ POWĀR; AND MĀLOPANT.

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH MAHĪPATI

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. I have heard of many means (of salvation), but I am not able to use them, for my speech became engrossed with devotion in singing the lives of the saints. 2. Some practise *yoga* postures, some perform sacrifices, some repeatedly read religious books, while some perform religious observances: but I have voluntarily become the bard of the Vaishnav *bhaktas* and sing of their pure fame. 3. It is they who through their favour cause me to write their own lives, for all the people know that I am dull and ignorant. 4. The God of gods, the Husband of Rukmini, is the guide, and the lotus-eyed One has the lives of his *bhaktas* written through me. 5. I do not possess any art or skill, I do not know how to construe words; the Lord of the world is the controller of all talents and He alone knows the secret of His own doing.

6. In the foregoing chapters * the good people have heard in detail the beautiful life of the noble Vaishnav Tukārām.

THE STORY OF KESHAV SWĀMĪ

7. In Vijāpur there was a great *bhakta* by name of Keshav Swāmī, who was a mine of devotion and knowledge and was entirely indifferent to worldly affairs. 8. He worshipped Shri Pāndurang according to the religious

* In chapters 25-40 Mahīpati's *Bhaktalāmṛt* contains his biography of Tukārām. These chapters are translated in vol. 7 of this Poet Saints Series entitled *Tukārām*; and chapters 13-24 contain his biography of Eknāth, translated in vol. 2 of this Series entitled *Eknāth*.

rights and continually repeated the names of God, having in his heart day and night the *sagun* form of God. 9. His heart was full of spiritual knowledge and yet he had love for the idolatrous form of God ; such a person is rarely to be found in the whole of creation, though long sought for ; 10. just as we might endeavour to find a woman endowed with beauty and at the same time faithful to her husband, but do not find many such. 11. Devotion, knowledge and entire indifference to worldly things were the ornaments of Keshav Swāmī, and he sang inspired poetry which was very pleasing to the ear. 12. He had compassion for all beings, he experienced the whole universe as his own self, his utterances were moulded by his experience and found expression in his *kīrtans*. 13. He went to Pandharī in the months of *Āshādh* (July) and *Kārtik* (November) and with love in his heart he continued his pilgrimage to Pandhari without fail. 14. As the noble Vaishnav performed his *kīrtans* it seemed as if the very goddess of pleasure came there in person ; his reputation spread very widely amongst men and he was greatly honoured. 15. The Life of the world looked on him with an eye of compassion, so he was respected by all men, for the former had taken a *sagun* form to save the world. 16. Feeling sick of his wide reputation, Keshav Swāmī left the place at midnight without telling anyone. 17. Intending to go and bathe in the Krishnā river, the Vaishnav *bhakta* continued his journey.

THE LORD OF PANDHARĪ AS A CHILD ON KESHAV'S SHOULDERS

18. As he was walking hurriedly along, he sang with love the praises of God, and the Lord of Pandhari came and rode on his shoulders in the form of a child. 19. Still the *bhakta* of Vishnu went on singing of the deeds of God in

many metres and God heard him with love as He sat on his shoulders. 20. As he went on his way, a farmer who was sitting on a raised platform saw the beautiful child on Keshav Swāmi's shoulders; 21. and as he looked at this *sagun* form of God his heart was at once deeply affected; while, however, his eyes were gazing on that form, the Swāmi went far ahead. 22. Anxiously longing to see the child again, the farmer said to himself, 'Such a child I have never seen before; and my heart would have been delighted if I could have picked it up and pressed it tightly to my heart.' 23. The farmer felt he had enjoyed a vivid manifestation of God, which remained before his eyes; caring neither for food nor water, he looked steadfastly in that direction. 24. As for the *bhakta* Keshav, he went forward to the bank of the Krishnā river and with repentance in his heart he bathed there. 25. In this way he stayed there for three nights and when the *bhakta* of Vishnu set off on his return journey, the farmer was waiting for him anxiously; for his mind was attracted by the great event (of God sitting on Keshav Swāmi's shoulders). 26. When he saw once more the *bhakta* Keshav with his eyes, he joined his hands palm to palm and made a *namaskār*, and said in sweet words like nectar, 27. 'O Swāmi, when you passed this way before, you had on your shoulders a very beautiful child which attracted my very heart. 28. Where have you left it? My eyes have become weary in waiting for you.' Hearing the story of the farmer, Keshava Swāmi felt deeply astonished; 29. he said to himself, 'I never took any child on my shoulders; what this farmer is saying I cannot understand;' the whole episode greatly puzzled him. 30. The noble Vaishnav then resorted to a forest and sitting in a lonely place, while concentrating and steadying his mind, he closed his eyes, 31. and pleaded, 'O Lord of Pandhari, God of gods, I have for ever given myself up to Thy service;

but, O Husband of Kamalā, Thou hast never given me a sight of Thee. 32. But taking the form of a child Thou didst ride on my shoulders and didst give a sight of Thyself to the farmer who was sitting on the raised platform. 33. O Shri Hari, if anyone worships Thee with devotion, Thou dost run away from him, but Thou dost stand in front of those who are not devoted and who hate Thee. 34. As Thou didst crawl on a crystal floor, Yashodā was not able to see Thee, O Thou lotus-eyed one ; while Thou didst ever stand in front of Kansa who hated Thee and who was very wicked. 35. This is Thy nature, that Thou dost hide Thyself from those who long to see Thee ; now give up Thy *nirgun* form, O God, and grant me a sight of Thyself. 36. If Thou dost not come now, I will give up my life.' As he pleaded thus in love the Husband of Rukmini understood it ; 37. and Shri Hari assuming a *sagun* (visible) form manifested himself before him ; so when Keshav opened his eyes he saw before him the Sporter of Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu). 38. The Husband of Rukmini was beautifully dark and tender ; in his ears were resplendent earrings ; and his divine yellow silk garment shone in such a way that it dazzled the eyes by its lustre. 39. He whom *yogīs* contemplate, and whom the blue-throated God (i. e., Shanker or Shiva) worships, he pressed Keshav Swāmi to his heart, and spoke these nectar words : 40. ' It was I who rode your shoulders as you were going to the bank of the Krishnā river ; but you were unconscious of your body, therefore you could not behold me with your eyes. 41. Now come to Vijāpur at once, and there follow the practice of performing *kīrtans* and that will be my true worship ; do not entertain any other thought.' 42. Thus addressing him, God disappeared ; for He makes His abode in the heart of His *bhaktas*. 43. Respecting the command of Shri Hari, he (Keshav Swāmi) returned to Vijāpur.

where the people were full of devotion and became very pleased.

KESHAV SWĀMĪ'S KĪRTAN

44. At that time a very wonderful event took place ; listen to it with attention. In that town there was a rich man, who was not only very wealthy but always happy. 45. He spent fifty thousand rupees on a mansion built for himself, and when the house-warming ceremony was performed the Brāhman were pleased with the gifts. 46. But into that mansion there entered two Brāhman ghosts and when the master of the house fell asleep, they threw him outside. 47. On account of his fear of ghosts the rich man left his new house and went to live in his former house with his wife and children. 48. In order to get rid of the Brāhman ghosts he had many severe religious observances performed, but none of these was of any use, for the Brāhman who were engaged as charmers were themselves harmed. 49. Some of the charmers therefore threw into the house some charmed ashes from outside, but if they tried to enter the house, they were bound hand and foot by the Brāhman ghosts. 50. Many methods were tried but all were of no avail ; and then some simple-minded men approached the rich person and advised him thus : 51. 'There is here a true Vaishnav by name of Keshav Swāmi, and if you will humbly request him to perform his *kīrtan* in the new mansion, the ghosts are sure to flee.' 52. This piece of advice the rich man accepted, and having requested Keshav Swāmi he brought him to perform his *kīrtnas* there. 53. Many noble Vaishnavs started, and from the musical instruments such as cymbals and drums a pleasing sound filled the sky. 54. A large number of worshippers also walked with banners as they loudly sang the names of God ; it seemed as if the very spirit of sound had come there in bodily form when the singers

loudly shouted God's names : 55. Rāmkrishna, Hari, Govind, Achyut, Anant, the root of joy, the supreme Spirit existing as truth, life and joy; Shri Mukund, the Guru of the world. 56. Many such names Keshavdās sang with love, but as he entered the building the Brāhman ghosts went in front of him. 57. The ghosts in human forms joined their hands palm to palm and said in a sweet tone, ' By the very sight of you we are saved.' 58. Having said this they disappeared, and all present wondered as they witnessed the wonderful event with their eyes. 59. This event became known all over the town and many people flocked to the *kīrtan*, so that the building could not accommodate them all. 60. As the fortunate people listened to the blessed words of Keshav Swāmī, their hearts were fixed on the name and form of God, and they became wholly engrossed. 61. For his theme Keshav Swāmī had selected the life of Shri Rāma and Shri Krishna, and as the audience listened to him they forgot themselves and their minds became wholly absorbed in the *kīrtan*. 62. This lasted for four watches of the night and when the sun arose, they took the platter of lights and waved it over the Husband of Rukminī. 63. The rich man had many sorts of dainty foods cooked and thousands of Brāhmins were fed. After that he went to live there with all his household.

THE STORY OF BĀJID PATHĀN

64. O pious ones, listen to the life of another saint. There was once a Pathān, Bājid by name, who was the Governor of an imperial province and commanded a large army. 65. His army numbered twenty-five thousand soldiers, he was very rich and always victorious in battle; a man of good actions, his enemies could not stand before him. 66. Going into North India he accumulated vast riches there and with his army of twenty-five thousand soldiers

he came back to his native land. 67. On his way to Vijāpur a remarkable event took place. The camel on whose back his treasure was loaded sank under its burden, 68. and died of a weak heart. Its driver then took the treasure off its back and sat waiting for his master. 69. On the master himself arriving with his elephants, horses, palanquins and chariots, Bājīd Pathān asked the driver as soon as he saw him, 70. 'Why are you sitting here on the road?' 'Because the camel is dead,' was his reply. The chief then said, 'It is merely sitting; raise him up at once; 71. for I notice that all his limbs are quite in order, what is there in it that is dead?' The driver, being afraid of his master, had recourse to the following device. 72. He put up four stakes of wood by the roadside and put the dead camel on them, loaded as usual with the treasure by the driver. 73. Bājīd had not yet learned how a man died, for all the men in his family were still living, and he had not witnessed any death nor even heard of it. 74. His grandfather, grandmother, mother and father, brothers, sons and wife were all living, so he did not know what death was. 75. He did not like to hear of another man's pain, therefore he had not witnessed pain or poverty even in his dreams. 76. He did not know that in this mortal world every being must yield to death; and by the power of good deeds in his former births he was given up to sensual enjoyments. 77. Therefore he said to the driver, 'Drive the camel quickly.' The driver replied, 'It is the life that makes any being move, but life has left the camel.' 78. Because of my fear of you I loaded the carcass of the camel with the treasure, but the mover of it (i. e., life) has escaped. What shall I do now? 79. There are eighty-four hundred thousand bodies, and all of them go to the same state.' As Bājīd heard him, repentance was aroused in his heart, 80. and he said, 'Truly is this human body perishable, and I too

must yield to the same state.' A righteous indifference to worldly things then arose in his heart, and he acted as follows. 81. He paid off all his horsemen and soldiers and the remaining money he distributed among the beggars. 82. Garments, adornments and ornaments also were given to the Brāhmans; for this is the characteristic of pure and righteous indifference to worldly things, and he was now without any attachment. 83. Then in the Muslim language he composed five hundred verses in the *Sūkī* metre. From among these I quote two *Sūkīs* (verses) here, and I think good people will find them acceptable.

Verse 1. O mind, worship Rama as you work, for the pleasures of a few days will meet with dust. 2. Wear a garland of *tals* beads and be thinking of the dark-complexioned one (i. e., God). Cook for yourself and eat only once a day.

84. Thinking thus in this heart, he became indifferent to worldly things, he conquered the six enemies of mankind, and became full of righteous and good qualities. 85. Then he went to Vijāpur and went to Keshav Swāmī as his suppliant, becoming his disciple and beginning to worship Rāma. 86. As soon as his *sadguru* favoured him, poetical inspiration came to him, and he began to perform *hīrtans* with love which gave joy and satisfaction to his listeners. 87. He composed many verses and in his verses he put his Swāmī's *abhangs* (verses) at the top. His reputation spread extensively in the world and he had a direct manifestation of God.

THE STORY OF SANTOBĀ POWĀR

88. There are many other lives of saints very wonderful in themselves; O pious *bhaktas*, listen to them. In Rānjangaon there lived Santobā Powār of worldwide fame. 89. No one served his *sadguru* like him, and if you ask how that was, listen to it. 90. Shivājī was a great king of many good actions and Santobā was a commander

under him, having in his charge two hundred horsemen, and holding some towns as a *Jāhūgirdār*. 91. He lived in Sandsāche Rānjangaon, and all the members of his family including their children and others were there. He commanded great respect and possessed a great fortune, but he had no children of his own. 92. His wife named Yesūbāi was of an excellent character, and both husband and wife lived together in mutual love. 93. Once his wife requested him to marry a second time so that their family would grow, saying, 'This state is only due to me.' 94. As Yesubāi thus advised her husband, Santobā said in reply, 'That will interfere with our love; 95. my brother has two sons; let us look on those as our own.' He therefore gave those children many costly garments and ornaments and loved them exceedingly. 96. During the next five or seven years the children of his brother grew up and then Santobā sent for a teacher and asked him to teach them. 97. He fixed his wages at one hundred rupees, and gave living quarters in the house to the teacher who began teaching the two children. 98. In order to see how the children were doing, Santobā once went to the teacher's quarters, just as the teacher had bathed and was performing mental worship. 99. He had covered himself with a blanket for a hood, and was repeating prayers with love. Santobā asked him, 'What are you muttering to yourself?' 100. The latter replied, 'I was repeating something which my *sadguru* has recommended to me.' Santobā then fell at his feet and requested him to give him the *mantra*. 101. The other replied, 'You should find out a *guru* worthy of yourself, and take *his* *mantra*, for I am your servant, and I stay here to earn a livelihood.' 102. Hearing these words, the *sadguru's bhakta* replied, 'A longing has arisen in my mind just now, and after a moment it might change, for this human body of ours is perishable.'

103. After saying this he had materials of worship brought, and falling prostrate at the feet of his *sadguru*, he acquired his favour in the form of the initiatory *mantra*. 104. Appointing another man to teach his children, he served his *sadguru* with pleasure and gave him many valuable things, 105. such as many costly garments, adornments and ornaments; and he worshipped him according to all the prescribed means, feasting a thousand Brāhmans and performing a *kīrtan*. 106. Then he had a new building built for his *swāmī* and also appointed a cook for him. 107. He also engaged many male and female servants to serve the *sadguru* and ordered his secretary to spend a thousand rupees. 108. Then he called to his wife and said to her, 'I am going far away with my army, and I shall not have the good fortune to serve my *swāmī*; therefore you look after his requirements and let him lack nothing.' 109. As he said this, Yesūbāi answered, 'By all means.' Then bowing to the feet of his *sadguru*, he at once joined his army. 110. Santobā Powār went to a far country with his army and fortune, and this *sadguru* was properly served just as he had arranged, 111. with plenty of garments, adornments and ornaments; and with dainty dishes to eat. But he had no wife, and therefore he was dejected at heart. 112. He was quite young, and he enjoyed rich luxuries, whereby an evil thought arose in his mind, and he began to long for sensual objects. 113. In his service there was a maid with whom he began to cohabit, and the rumour about this fell on the ears of the secretary. 114. Besides being evil-minded, he had now found out this trifling matter and the result was that he became a drunken monkey. 115. Many talked of him here and there saying, 'Santobā is very simple and pious, and had he joined another *sadguru*, it would have added to his public fame. 116. In his former birth he owed a debt to his teacher, and in this birth he is paying it off. Now he has in his service

a mistress and he is wholly given up to sensual enjoyment.' 117. Yesūbāi, Santobā's wife, was a devoted woman and people told her this news, for they could not keep it to themselves. 118. Said they, 'While the Commander has gone with his army his *guru* here is behaving in a most unseemly manner. He has placed his assuring hand on the head of the maid and enjoys her.' 119. Yesūbāi replied, 'You are insulting him for nothing, and when my husband returns you will be put to shame.' 120. The revilers and rogues became silent when they heard this from Yesūbāi; they struggled at heart how to act, but were unable to do anything. 121. Yesubāi herself every now and then looked after the requirements of the *sadguru* who lacked nothing, and she bowed devotedly to him. 122. After a year had passed away Santobā returned home, and his secretary went to receive him and brought him to his house. 123. First of all he went to the house of his *sadguru*, made him a prostrate *namaskār*, embraced him, and felt very satisfied at heart. 124. On the following day the *bhakta* of the *sadguru* had prepared all the materials for a great worship, when evil-minded ones came to him and whispered in his ear: 125. 'You wish to worship your *sadguru*, but his mind is given up to his maid.' Santobā only smiled and spoke the following words, 126. 'In this earthly life I had the good fortune to acquire a *sadguru* as a father, but I had no mother to worship, therefore a very good event has occurred.' 127. With good devotion at heart he therefore started a festival at his house, worshipping his *sadguru* while sweet musical instruments were sounding. 128. As gifts to his *sadguru* he gave garments, adornments and ornaments and offered him incense and waved over him the platter of lights. 129. He also offered ornaments to his *sadguru's* wife like those to his own wife; prostrating himself before both of them he exclaimed, 'Blessed is this day.' 130. Thus

came to an end the worship of the *sadguru*, and then there was the feeding of Brāhmans, but out of fear none said anything evil of the *sadguru*. 131. The revilers were inwardly ashamed, just as at the rise of the sun the darkness is destroyed. 132. When one's mind is pure, even enemies become friends, and in the same way Santobā's good devotion turned sin into a good action. 133. Seeing his limitless devotion and his longing for the service of the *sadguru*, the Soul of the world, the Lord of Vaikunth (i e., Vishnu), was pleased at heart. 134. Therefore as Santobā was a great *bhakta* there was nothing lacking in his service of the *sadguru*; day by day his devotion grew. 135. (God) said, ' I myself am really the *sadguru*, and he has worshipped me properly, therefore as a reward I must offer him devotion without limit, coupled with indifference to worldly things. ' 136. As the Life of the world was thus thinking a good occasion offered itself. In the *Har-kīrtan* he heard two *abhangs* (verses) of Tukārām. 137. Thereby his heart repented, and he said to himself, ' I must give up my family life now, and abandoning my body, house and attachment to such earthly things, I must worship the Lord of Pandhari. ' 138. Then he distributed his clothes and ornaments to the Brāhmans and satisfied them, he himself wore torn cloth and went to sit on an island. 139. His wife was a faithful one and she went in search of her husband, who asked her, ' Why have you come here, giving up your attachment to earthly existence ? ' 140. She replied, ' I am attached to your feet, just as the shadow is to the body, or as *māyā* is to Brahm. I have no other place to go to. ' 141. Santobā possessed inward understanding enough to know the signs of devotion and of indifference to worldly things, and so he said, ' I live on the leaves of trees and do not eat food at all. ' 142. As his intelligent wife heard him she threw away her clothes and ornaments,

and after fasting for three days they had a *sagu* manifestation of God. 143. Pādurang came there in person and gave them a loving embrace and assured them by saying, 'I, Shripati, will stay in your hearts, therefore do not feel sorry at separation from me. 144. In future earn your food by begging, and with love sing my praise.' With that the Husband of Rukminī disappeared. 145. Santobā's state of mind was one incomparable, for while in the body he enjoyed the state of being without a body; he had devotion for his *sadguru* without limit and so Shripati (God) was satisfied. 146. He performed many miracles which the people witnessed, turned many to the path of devotion, and he himself was entirely free from desires.

THE LIFE OF MĀLOPANT

147. Now, O pious *bhaktas*, listen to the wonderful life of Mālopant, a very loving *bhakta* of God, and with whom the Lord of Pandharī was pleased. 148. In the country of Berar he formerly lived, being most good-natured and the very image of good actions, wholly given up to the devotion of Vithobā. 149. This gentleman was well-known as a trader; he had his trade in the Karnātak, living there with his family and always remembering Vitthal. 150. He had a very well behaved son by name Narahari, and both father and son were righteous and considerate. 151. Mālopant looked on the whole universe as himself and he had compassion for all beings, giving food to the poor and to accidental guests (i. e., who came at the noon meal-time). 152. He always worshipped Vishnu and showed a great love in the *kīrtan* of Shri Hari, serving the saints with great respect and never uttering a falsehood. 153. In this way many days rolled on and his wife died; his mind then became sorrowful and he did not know what to do. 154. But advising himself he said, 'It is

well, for I am now free from the meshes of earthly existence.' Bringing to his mind the Husband of Rukminī he destroyed all his ignorance. 155. But people urged him to marry a second time and they found out for him as a bride the daughter of a wayfarer. The wedding was at once performed but it resulted unhappily in the end. 156. After some days the father of his wife, a Mahār by caste, arrived there and recognised his daughter. 157. Going to Mālopant, he told him everything from beginning to end, viz., the name of his town, his own name, and so forth, and also the fact that he was a Mahār by caste. 158. Said he, 'Thieves carried off at midnight my daughter who is now your wife; the way of life is indeed devious.' 159. As Mālopant heard him he greatly repented at heart and exclaimed, 'Save me, save me, O Lord of Vaikunth. I am the only sinful person in the three worlds. 160. I am an image of the collection of all the sins in the world. O purifier of the sinful, O merciful to the lowly, know this for certain.' 161. Then he called to his wife and asked her if she could make out her father. Knowing inwardly what was meant, she said not a word in answer. 162. Then Mālopant addressed the unnameable (i.e., the Mahār) and said, 'Take away your daughter, and I shall do just as Brāhmans may order.' 163. The unnameable (i.e., the Mahār) then replied, 'What is the good of accepting a polluted vessel? The people of my caste will raise an objection. What shall I do then?' 164. Thus addressing Mālopant, the Mahār returned to his own town, and found the scandal had spread among the people saying, 'He has brought pollution into society.' 165. The man who had offered the girl in marriage to him had already escaped the night before, for the bad man had left the country with his whole family, including the children. 166. In his earthly life Mālopant possessed wealth, and the evil-minded who had formerly come to his shelter now left

him at this critical moment. 167. He had only his son who was of very good character, and all his 'dinner friends' had deserted him. 168. The Brāhmans excommunicated him; his relatives left him; but through repentance, all his sin had been destroyed. 169. Then he sent for the Brāhmans and had all his possessions plundered by them while he gave himself up to the worship of Shri Hari for ever and in love. 170. Then Mālopant called a committee of Brāhmans and prostrated himself before them, joining his hands palm to palm, and pleading with them, to lay down for him some penance. 171. The Brāhmans looked into their religious books, and all who were well versed in the study of the *Vedas* and *Shāstras* told him unanimously that there was no other means of penance than self-destruction. 172. Hearing the judgment of the Brāhmans, Mālopant said in reply, 'I also am of the same opinion: but what is the way? Please tell me clearly.' 173. On this the earth-gods (i. e., the Brāhmans) said to him. 'Find out a big hollow in a tamarind tree; seat yourself inside it, and fill it up with cowdung. 174. Then with your own hands set it on fire, and if you practise the penance of self-destruction in this way, then only will your sin be destroyed.' 175. As Mālopant heard the words of the Brāhmans he said, 'Very well. Whatever is to be experienced as a result of bad actions in my former births I cannot escape it.' 176. Then he sat in the hollow, filled it with cowdung and set fire to it, and loudly pleaded at heart with Pāndurang. 177. 'O my family deity, Vithābāi, the inhabitant of Pandharpur, now at once hasten to my help and free me from my former bad actions. 178. Men who were friends of my fortune I considered as my dear relatives, but as the time of my death approached, all of them deserted me. 179. Now I have no connection with any earthly things, viz., public honour and dishonour, children, wife and fortune. Now

cut asunder my bodily ties. 180. Now I do not care if disturbances of various descriptions heap themselves upon me; nay, I am not afraid even if the sky falls on my person, but at heart let me remember Thee. 'This is the only thing I beg of Thee, O Shri Hari.' 181. With this resolve at heart, he closed both his eyelids, and at heart he began to think of the form of Vitthal, a form of real happiness which the *yogīs* alone can experience. 182. Inwardly he meditated on God with concentration, and his lips uttered the names of God thus:— 'Keshav, Nārāyan, Madhusūdan, the purifier of the fallen and the ocean of mercy. 183. Achyut, Anant, Govind, the supreme Spirit of God existing in the form of truth, life and joy, the Saviour of the world and the root of happiness, Shri Mukund, the Guru of the world. 184. Shri Rāma, Raghu-pati, the destroyer of Rāvan, the killer of demons and the Founder of Religion, O Lord of the Universe, with great valour Thou hast freed the gods. 185. O Krishna, O Vishnu, the one dark as cloud, the Saviour of Thy *bhaktas*, Purushottam, O ātmārām, let me have love in Thy worship; this is the only thing I beg of Thee.' 186. In this way Mālopant was pleading with God in love; from his eyes streamed tears of love and the Lord of Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu) was pleased with him. 187. The fire was then burning furiously, and the wind blowing forcibly, but he felt the touch of the fire to his body as very cool and his body was not at all scorched. 188. Then the Brāhmans began to talk between themselves, 'The strength of the name of God is wonderful and unfathomable. Fire cannot burn him, for the Life of the world protects him. 189. In former times the demon Hiranyakashyapu tried to burn Pralhād the *bhakta* to death, but he was not burnt. The same is the case with him (Mālopant).' In this way the Brāhmans talked amongst themselves. 190. The hollow was entirely burnt up by that time and

cinders of it fell down, but the loving *bhakta* of God came out of the ordeal safe and sound. 191. All the people wondered and said, 'Blessed is his loving devotion. The Husband of Lakshmi became pleased with him in time of danger. This indeed is an event passing wonder.' 192. The Brāhmans now said to Mālopant, 'You are indeed very holy, and possess good actions, for the Lord of Pandhari ran to your help in your critical moment, and now you are free from every blame.' 193. Mālopant withdrew from all business and gave himself up to *Harikīrtans*. His words were full of compassion and he uttered the inspired words of the saints. 194. The unnameable (i. e., the Mahār) girl whom he had married through ignorance fell into the company of saints, and repentance arose in her heart. 195. She said to Mālopant, 'Please tell me some means of salvation. Whatever was destined has come to pass in accordance with my bad actions in my former births.' 196. As the Vaishnav *bhakta* heard this, he replied, 'You are not to be at all blamed; your father has forsaken you, now I shall give you food and raiment. 197. As for the way of salvation, remember what I now tell you: "Always think of Shri Hari and talk of no other things."' 198. The woman replied, 'By all means.' After saying this she prostrated herself before him at a distance, where a cottage was erected away from the town population, and she went to live in it. 199. She kept her clothes and vessels very clean, bathed every day, and had a great liking for taking the names of God, her heart knowing no deviation. 200. Malopant sent her food on a plate by the hand of a man, and she ate only that much and lovingly thought of God. 201. 'Through the influence of good company she became righteous and Nārāyan (i. e., Vishnu) gave her his manifestation out of his own mercy. 202. Some days rolled on in this manner, and her

life came to an end. The messengers of Vishnu drew her life and took her to Vaikunth (i. e., the heaven of Vishnu). 203. When Mālopant knew that she was dead he said to himself, ' But who will perform her funeral according to religious rites, so that she may have a good state in the next world ? 204. For the Mahārs or the Shūdras will not touch her. ' Then Mālopant thought of cremating her himself. 205. ' For my sake she had to undergo disgrace ; now she has gone to the other world ; therefore it is right that I perform the funeral myself. ' 206. Thus thinking at heart, he entered the cottage and as he uncovered the dead body he saw before him flowers in its place. 207. He exclaimed, ' Mighty is the power of the worship of Vishnu and it has been brought to the public notice. Shārangdhar (i. e., Vishnu) increases the reputation of his *bhaktas*. ' 208. From that time the people began to revere Mālopant saying, ' The Lord of Rukmīnī is his helper and great disturbances disappeared. ' 209. Since that time Mālopant sang in his *kīrtan* with songs full of pathos. Listening to him the simple audience was overcome at heart. 210. In his *kīrtan* he sang in all the nine rhetoric sentiments* and the *bhaktas* of Vishnu listened to him ; but the sentiment of pathos is the highest of all those sentiments which are the means of the acquisition of God. 211. If you have a craving to cross over to the other side of the earthly ocean, then plead with God in the sentiment of pity and that will be the means of freedom for your soul. 212. If the *bhakta* thinks of meeting with God, then he himself should resort to a forest and plead with God in a humble manner. 213. Hearing the plea, the Lord of Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu) comes there at once. Such is his nature ; for his fame has been described by Shri Vyās. 214. If one is not able to sit in seclusion

* See ' Words Under Numeral 9, ' pp. 440-1, *Stories of Indian Saints*, vol 2.

he should carry on his earthly life, but for some hours every day he should listen to the stories of saints with a steady mind. 215. The devotion of Shri Hari is of nine kinds, but of these, 'listening' is the highest of all; by this means, King Parikshiti was saved and many have had the same experience.

216. In the next chapter I am going to relate a very beautiful story, but it is the Husband of Shri Rukmini who causes me to speak. Through His blessing of assurance Mahipati speaks out words of inspiration. 217. *Suasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktalīlāmrit* and by merely listening to it the desires of one's heart are fulfilled. May the loving saints and *bhaktas* listen. This is the forty-first delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XLII

PREMĀBĀĪ, SHILĀBĀĪ, QUEEN RAMĀBĀĪ,
PILĀBĀĪ, PRINCESS RAMĀBĀĪ, RĀMRĀJĀ
AND NARAHARIDĀS

INVOCATION

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Without the mercy of Shri Hari all other means (of salvation) appear as vain. Although one may have studied the fourteen kinds of learning, they are, as it were, a lamp without a flame. 2. Even if one masters the sixtyfour arts they are as good as nothing without the mercy of Shri Hari; for the dolls do not dance without a string. 3. The *Vedas*, *Shāstras* and *Purāns* are good for nothing without the favour of God; it is just as if one were to marry a wife only to feed her and to have no issue. 4. If we do not plead from time to time in a pitiful manner with the one who is dark as a cloud, then our poetical power is of no use; it is only a trouble to the tongue. 5. They alone who give themselves over through good devotion to Pāndurang without any bodily power and wag their heads absorbed while in his *kīrtan* in love's ecstasy, they alone have acquired good fame. 6. Compassionate to his *bhaktas*, the merciful to the lowly does not think of caste or race ; he is pleased the very moment he sees the power of pure devotion.

7. In the last chapter the beautiful story of the great *bhakta* Keshav Swāmi was related, and also how Bājid the Muslim became a noble Vaishnav; 8. how Santobā Powār by the power of his devotion to his *guru* acquired indifference to worldly things ; and how the Lord of Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu) hastened to help Mālopant in his distress.

THE STORY OF PREMĀBĀĪ

9. Now, O loving good people, there will be the relating of another delightful story, about Premābāī who was given to listening to the *Shrī Bhāgavat*.*

10. She was without a husband, she was ignorant of all knowledge and of all indifference to worldly things, but by dint of her devotion and piety she had pleased the Recliner on Shesha (i. e., Vishnu). 11. She did not make the slightest difference between herself and others; nor between what was even and uneven; she looked equally on all beings, and considered the whole universe as being one. 12. She showed great kindness towards all beings, she had a great longing for listening to *kīrtans*, satisfying the hungry and needy as her means permitted. 13. If saints, *sādhus* and loving Vaishnavs came to her house, she gave them quarters, and she was continually given up to thinking of God which she did with love. 14. Every day she bathed in the water of the river,† worshipping the image of Gopāl; and when the pundits read the *Bhāgavat* she always went to listen to it. 15. As she listened to the stories of Shrī Hari her eyes filled with tears, all her limbs became powerless, and she had no bodily consciousness. 16. As she sat listening to the *Harikīrtan* she was always in a subconscious state, so the Vaishnav *bhaktas* gave her the name of Premābāī. 17. On one occasion some saints who were very hungry came to her house and she thought to herself, 18. ' If I go to listen to the *Purān* I shall not have the good fortune to serve the saints, and that will destroy all my good actions. What should I do ? 19. If while

* Concerning the *Bhāgavat Purān*, which is very popular all over Mahārashtra, see the Introduction.

† In Mahipati's original, 'Gangā' is here used as is usual in reference to any sacred river. It does not mean the Ganges of Benares.

worshipping Vishnu his *bhaktas* come to one's house, one should leave all worship at once and bow at their feet. 20. For if Vaishnavs come into the yard of one's house, and if one does not go to receive them but continues in worship, then Hari does not like it. 21. The Lord of Vaikunth, as He hears the *mantras* of the *Vedas*, regards them as so many foul words used about Him, and He wonders how it can be remedied. 22. Such a one offers as beautiful flowers what God considers as stones; and Shri Hari takes such worship in the light of a beating. 23. Such worship is, as it were, covering the head with a cloth while the wearer does not know that the lower portion of the body is naked; or it is as if one might erect a canopy by breaking down a house. 24. If one engages himself in the worship of God when a Brāhman guest who comes unexpectedly has to turn away, God does not like it; that is the decision of religion and of the *śāstras*. 25. After saying these things to herself, Premābāi did not go to listen to the reading of the *Purāṇ*, for there was no one at home to serve the *sādhus*, and so she stayed at home. 26. But while she was busy in her household affairs her heart was in the *Purāṇ*, and she thought to herself, 'In the temple of Hari, the reading of the *Bhāgavat* is surely going on.' 27. She had a son ten years old and she told him to go and listen to the reading of the *Purāṇ*: 28. 'You bow down to the reader of the *Purāṇ*, then come back to me and relate to me the whole story.' Hearing the order of his mother Premābāi, the son replied, 'Surely.' 29. So she sent her son to listen to the reading of the *Purāṇ*, but while she was doing her household work her mind was really engaged in the relating of the story of Shri Hari; 30. just as a cow grazes on a mountain, but her whole heart is thinking of her calf; every moment she erects her ears and lows and looks back; 31. or as a female bird flies high up in the

sky but her thought is about her young ones; or as a woman does her work but she cannot help thinking of her infant child; 32. in exactly the same way Premābāi was performing her household duties, but her mind was directed toward the narrating of the life of Shri Hari; at that time she did not even think of her body. 33. The cooking being finished, the Vaishnav *bhaktas* returned to the house of Premābāi after bathing in the Gangā river. 34. She washed their feet and drank the water as holy, and then she offered them sandalwood paste, rice and flowers with love. 35. She herself served food on the plates and made the offering of food to Krishna, and when the Vaishnavs were satisfied, she gave them leaves of *tulsī* for cleaning the mouth.

PREMĀBĀI'S SON TELLS OF KRISHNA

36. Meanwhile the son of Premābāi who had gone to listen to the reading of the *Purān* returned, and both sat down together and finished their meal. 37. When it was one 'watch' to the close of the day Premābāi called her son and said to him, 'Whatever you heard of the *Purān*, relate to me in detail.' 38. At the wish of Premābāi, her son came and sat nearer and said, 'O mother dear, listen with reverence to the relation of the *Purān* which I heard. 39. At the house of Nand and Yashodā, Shri Krishna descended as an *avatār* in Gokul. Yashodā herself churned the curds when Vanamālī (i. e., Krishna) came to her. 40. The Life of the world (i. e., Krishna) wept, heaving sobs, and urged her to nurse him, so Yashodā stopped her churning and took Shri Krishna for nursing. 41. She put into his mouth one of her breasts which the Life of the world sucked with great taste and caught the other with his other hand, as he looked in the face of his mother. 42. Mighty was the luck of Yashodā that the great Brahm which is beyond *Māyā*, the best of men, took a *sugun* form and sucked her breast. 43. On this occasion

Shri Hari thought in his mind, "Let me see if mother loves *me* or whether she loves her earthly affairs." 44. So thinking in his mind Krishna ordered the fire to burn furiously and to boil the milk till it flowed over. 45. As the Life of the world so wished, the fire burned furiously, all the milk flowed over, and the odour of it as it burned was realized by the nose. 46. As Yashodā felt the burning odour of the milk she understood what it was, and when she took out her breast from the mouth of Chakrapāni (i. e., Krishna) he began to cry. 47. Leaving there the One dark as a cloud (i. e., Krishna), she ran to the fireplace and noticed that all the milk had run over, at which she felt very uneasy. 48. The mother threw away the *paris* (touchstone) which she possessed, and tried to practise alchemy; her entire action was as if she denied the existence of God; 49. or else it was as if one should disregard the ocean of milk and bring up a goat, and when one goes to milk it he finds that it was already milked by someone else; 50. or it was like forsaking a heavenly tree and like watering a palm tree (from which wine is extracted); but to one's sorrow one finds that the leaves of that tree were taken away by someone to make a broom of them; 51. or it was like throwing away a garland of pearls and going to pick up small stones in a forest, but not finding even these there either; so that going there was good for nothing; 52. in just the same way Mother Yashodā left Shri Krishna who was the great Brahm itself and went to see the milk, but when she found the true state of things it disquieted her mind.

KRISHNA'S ANGER AT YASHODĀ

53. To return to Shri Krishna: he flew into a rage and said, "My mother loves the earthly affairs better than me; 54. for while she was nursing me in love, earthly affairs attracted her mind; therefore I must devise some plan by which to

punish her." 55. So Krishna turned over the pot of curds, and Shri Hari (i. e., Krishna) brought his young friends to the house, 56. distributing to them whatever butter was in store ; and the Recliner on Shesha (i. e., Krishna) broke to pieces all the vessels. 57. After Krishna had done all this mischief, Yashodā came out and saw that the Life of the world (i. e., Krishna) had thrown over the curds and had distributed the butter among the children. 58. When Yashodā saw this, a fit of anger possessed her and she said, " No one is so mischievous as he in all the three worlds ; 59. there are children in every house but he is more mischievous than them all; now I quite believe in the complaints which the women of the town make to me." 60 After saying this, Yashomati (i. e., Yashodā) took a cane in her hand, whereupon the Lord of the world (i. e., Krishna) ran away, his mother following him. 61. Hari appeared before her eyes for a moment, but as she attempted to catch him, Chakrapāni (i. e., Krishna) vanished out of sight, and was seen again a moment after. 62. As in haste Yashodā tried to find him out he hid himself behind the wall, and the milkmaids said, " You felt very happy when you indulged him. 63. We always brought our complaints about him to you, that Chakrapāni (i. e., Krishna) did so much mischief, but you always gave us the lie. Have you not now proved the truth of what we said ? " 64. Yashodā searched for him from street to street while Krishna hid himself in the corners, and a large crowd of milkmaids assembled, but Krishna was nowhere to be found. 65. For he entertained a great fear of his mother, and therefore *Shārangdhar* (i. e., Krishna) ran and ran though it was midday and the sun was very hot. 66. His mother herself was much fatigued by running, and her beautiful body was all in perspiration. " What is to be done ? " 67. She said to herself, " If I catch hold of him once, I will never leave him. I

will fasten Shripati (i. e., Krishna) in the temple of my heart." 68. Understanding the heart of his mother, the mine of mercy said to himself, " My mother is put to so much trouble, I must now be quiet." 69. As Yashodā looked she saw before her the Lord of the world, so she caught hold of his wrist and could not contain her anger. '

KRISHNA BOUND AS A ROBBER

70. (Continuing his story, Premābāi's son said,) ' Yashodā then dragged Chakrapāni and brought him into the house, all the milkmaids assembling in the house and surrounding the Queen of Nand (i. e., Yashodā). 71. Then they faced Yashodā and said, " Your Krishna is a robber and a paramour ; we have often told you so, but you would not believe us. 72. Today you caught him yourself when he overturned the pot of curds ; now fasten him to the mortar, for there is no punishment more effective than that." 73. As the milkmaids said this, Murāri (i. e., Krishna) sobbed and sobbed ; but though the tears streamed down his face, still his mother had no pity for him. 74. She unfastened the rope of a cow and tried to fasten Krishna with it but it fell short by a span ; and she could not quite tie it. 75. Then she brought another rope and added it to the former but this also fell short by a span and Yashodā was at a loss to know what to do. 76. As the ropes were joined together they fell short, and though nine hundred thousand ropes were brought, even then one span was wanting. 77. So the milkmaids went to their houses and brought ropes and requested the mother, " Tie Krishna fast to the mortar and punish him, O mother." 78. The house had already contained nine hundred thousand ropes, and besides these all the ropes from all the houses of the town were brought and Yashodā joined them together, but ultimately they all fell short. 79. The milkmaids were bewitched by the *Māyā* of

Vishnu, so also was mother Yashodā, for the pervader of the universe, Chakrapāni (i. e., Krishna) had assumed a human form in the house of Nand. 80. Thus did Yashodā in love try to bind him, the pores of whose body contained several universes; this was indeed a surpassing wonder. 81. She did not know that he was without form and without name and that his extreme limits even Brahmadev and other gods did not know; and therefore all the ropes were inadequate to bind him. 82. On account of its vast extent the sky is visible to the eyes of all, but no one knows whence to bring ropes to fasten it. 83. With what stones can a dam (or sluice) be built in the ocean of milk? No one knows how hospitality could be shown to nectar. 84. There are no scales to weigh the earth; and no one knows exactly where the wind could be found. 85. In the same way, mother Yashodā tried to fasten Krishna but since he is without limit and without extremity all the ropes fell short in binding him. 86. But Yashodā thought Krishna was her son and the milkmaids looked upon him as the child of Nand; therefore they tried to fasten Shārangdhar (i. e., Krishna) with nine hundred thousand ropes; 87. but they appeared short every time by a span, for the ends could not be tied together; therefore Yashodā became weary and was at a loss to know what she should do. 88. "Were I able to bind Krishnanāth just for once, I would not let him free again." As Bhagwant (i. e., Krishna) understood the wish of his mother, compassion arose in his mind. 89. Said he, "Mother Yashodā is wearying herself in the effort to bind me, so I must let her wish be fulfilled." 90. As Chakrapāni thus thought to himself the rope became long enough to bind him, and the mother at once tied the two ends and all the milkmaids smiled. 91. As the Life of the world (i. e., Krishna) was tied to the mortar, he looked at his mother pitifully and said in a pleading

tone, "From today I will do no more mischief. Please set me free." 92. Saying this the slayer of the demoness Putanā (i. e., Krishna) dropped tears from his eyes; but the mother left him alone in that condition and busied herself in her household affairs. 93. In all the foregoing narrative the listener should remember the former context that the son of Premābāi was relating to his mother the Life of Shri Krishna. 94. As she (Premābāi) heard this story her throat was choked with emotion; from her eyes tears streamed and she said, 'Who would free the dark complexioned one?' 95. Simply because he overturned the curds Krishna was fastened (by His mother). She cannot be called a mother; she must be a hag; I really think her to be so.' 96. Premābāi then addressed her son saying, 'I give in your charge all my earthly belongings, for I must straightway go to Gokul and set free Krishna with my own hands.' 97. As she uttered these words her life left her body; the Vaishnav guests who had come to her house witnessed this with their own eyes; 98. so they began to say one to another, 'Blessed is the devotion of Premābāi; for it was as she was thinking of the image of Krishna in her heart that she went to her final home.' 99. Upon her there suddenly fell a shower of fragrant *tulsī* leaves and flowers, and at this striking event the people shouted, 'Victory, Victory' 100. After her death her son performed the holy anniversary. The devotion of Premābāi is blessed, and her fame has spread through the whole world.

THE STORY OF PRINCESS SHILĀBĀI

101. Another delightful biography is that of Shilābāi the princess. O pious people, listen to it with reverence. 102. Her father engaged a learned Brāhman to teach her in her girlhood. 103. Accordingly he taught her how to read and write. The teacher regularly worshipped the

Shāligrām (an emblem of Vishnu); 104. and one day while in the act of worshipping, Shilābāi watched him and addressed her teacher thus, ' Please listen to my request. 105. Bring me a stone of *Shāligrām* to worship.' Saying this, she bowed to him with love. 106. Seeing the great desire of the girl, the teacher devised a plan of finding out a soft stone and telling her that it was the *Shāligrām* which she should worship. 107. Listening to his words she felt much comforted at heart, and she procured a seat, a wrapper and the kind of utensils she had seen with her *guru*. 108. At early morning she took a bath and commenced her worship, and in her worship she exactly followed her teacher. 109. Though she did not know the *mantras* of worship yet her devotion and belief were firm, and as Śhrīpati saw her loving devotion, he manifested himself then and there. 110. For the Lord of Vaikunth is fond of devotion, and does not care for wisdom ; hence he gives no manifestation where there is no devotion. 111. Shilābāi's devotion was full of love, therefore God manifested Himself in the stone, and Mādhav (i. e., Vishnu) accepted her worship of love. For He saw in her a great love for God. 112. Her parents not knowing this, thought the child was merely playing a game ; and by and by when the girl became of marriageable age, 113. a subsidiary prince was chosen as a bridegroom, and the marriage ceremony went on for four days, after which the girl was sent to her husband's home. 114. She took with her a small box containing her worshipping materials, and on the first day in her journey, while on the way, she offered to God the waving of lights with great devotion. 115. Her husband was evil minded, and as she worshipped he saw that she had by her the basket of materials for worship. 116. Then all unknown to Shilābāi he took the basket and threw it into the depths of the stream with all its contents, including

the worshipping utensils. 117. With a bad intention he destroyed the basket of worship and he came to know that she thought that he was acting very cleverly in thus putting a stop to his wife's spiritual riches. 118. At sunrise the beautiful princess bathed, but she could not find her basket of worship. 119. So she felt greatly concerned and said, 'What has become of my *Shūlgrām*? I shall give up my life, if I do not find it: this is my firm resolve. 120. O God of gods, O Lord of Vaikunth, was there anything lacking in my service that Thou hast thus abandoned me? I very much miss Thee.' 121. As she became overcome with emotion her eyes filled with tears and she exclaimed, 'O God, if I am not able to worship Thee, surely I shall have no care for my life.' 122. Her father-in-law and mother-in-law advised her a good deal, and her husband did the same, but the good lady would touch neither food nor water; her resolve was unshakable. 123. In this way some days rolled on and at the end Shri Hari was pleased with her, for he assumed the form of her teacher and in her dream handed over to her the basket of worship. 124. As Shilābāi awoke she saw the materials of worship close at hand, so she at once bathed and performed the worship. 125. When her husband saw this he very much wondered, and said, 'I threw away all the articles separately and in different places. 126. Then who has collected all the things by diving into the water?' Deeply repenting he said, 'I have troubled my wife in vain.' 127. Seeing the wonderful resolve of Princess Shilābāi the God of gods was pleased with her, and after this remarkable experience, the husband himself became a worshipper of Vishnu.

THE STORY OF QUEEN RAMĀBĀI

128. Still another very interesting life is that of Queen Ramābāi. May the listeners listen to it with rever-

once. In Hindustān (i. e., North India) there was a subsidiary king and Ramābāi was his queen. 129. She celebrated all birthdays with love of all the *avatārs* of Vishnu, such as the Fish, the Tortoise, the Boar, Narsinha, Vaman, Bhārgav (i. e., Parashurāma), Rāma and Krishna. 130. She decorated the seats, worshipped the image of Vishnu, and gave food to all beings : and the Vaishnavs performed a *kīrtan*. 131. On the eleventh day of every fortnight there was a Hari-watch at night, and in this way she increased the devotion of Vishnu and uttered the names of God day and night. 132. As a subsidiary king her husband was known by the name of Narapāl, being a noble Vaishnav who worshipped God inwardly but did not like the outward form. 133. As he did not worship Vishnu, did not listen to the *Harikīrtan*, and did not utter the names of God with his lips, the people censured him. 134. They said, 'The queen is very pious and good-natured but her husband, the king, is bad ; he has wasted his life ; and he does not remember at heart the one dark as a cloud.' 135. In this way the people censured him, but the prince's internal devotion was firm, and not a moment went without his remembering God. 136. One day the queen said to her husband, ' I think you should perform at least some worship of Vishnu.' 137. Listening to her the prince said, ' My body is given to sensual things, therefore I do not like the way of devotion.' 138. But his heart was full of love of God, and he did not forget God even for a moment ; but the people took him to be very worldly, for they knew nothing about his inward devotion. 139. One day as the prince was asleep in his palace, and while turning over on the other side, he uttered the name of Rāma with his lips.' 140. His wife overheard it and was greatly pleased, and as the sun arose she made a great celebration. 141. There took place the worshipping of Vishnu, the performance of *Harikīrtan*, and

giving of gifts to deserving Brāhmans. When the king asked her the reason of the festival, 142. the queen replied, 'While you were sleeping at night your lips uttered the name of Rāma ; at the time I listened to it with a quiet mind. 143. And my heart feels such great satisfaction that I have arranged this festival.' As the beautiful lady thus spoke, what did Prince Narapāl do? 144. He exclaimed, 'Rāma has gone out of my body, then why should I now live any longer?' After saying this the prince at once breathed his last. 145. When the Vaishnav people there witnessed this wonderful event, they came to know the secret about the prince's inward devotion. 146. Seeing the deep devotion of her husband, the queen also gave up her life ; thus did both of them make the occasion notable and link themselves with God. 147. Such is the result of firm devotion ; for there have been very many, one excelling the other, who by storing the Lord of Vaikunth in their hearts have enjoyed the everlasting happiness of love.

THE STORY OF PILĀBĀI : AN OFFICIAL'S DAUGHTER

148. There is another sweet and beautiful story, and if one will listen to it with reverence, the Soul of the world will favour him with His eye of mercy and help him in times of distress. 149. A State Minister had a daughter named Pilābāi. She always worshipped Vishnu. After the death of her husband she went to stay with her parents. 150. After some time the father also died. She had two brothers who took care of her, but there took place a quarrel between the two. 151. Each of them took forcible possession of a town and thus they were separated, the younger brother maintaining an army to fight. 152. The younger one plundered and laid waste the town of the elder brother. The worshipping materials, including Pilābāi's image of God, had also gone in the

plunder. 153. Without offering her daily worship Pilābāi could not eat food; so she sent word to her brother asking him to find out and return to her the object she always worshipped. 154. He had a close search made but the image of God could not be found, so he sent a message to Pilābāi that she should come over there in person and make the search herself. 155. Going to his town she made a strict search but she could not find the idol of Vishnu, and hence she had to fast for five days. 156. Seeing her resolve, Chakrapāni (i. e., Vishnu) was pleased with her, and in the garb of a Brāhman He came and appeared to her in the dream and gave her the image. 157. Seeing this miracle the younger brother repented and said, 'I quarrelled for nothing;' and he made supplication to his elder brother 158. saying, 'I am entirely guilty; I invaded you with my army; the image of God was lost in the plunder, and in this way I have troubled the Life of the world.' 159. With repentance at heart, both brothers embraced each other and became the disciples of Pilābāi and took from her the initiatory *mantra*. 160. As they served with true devotion, both of them had a manifestation of God.

THE STORY OF RAMĀBĀI

161. Now let the listeners listen with reverence to another delightful story. There was a king named Sant who was always ready to serve the saints. He had a marriageable daughter whose marriage had been fixed. 162. After the marriage it was plain that the husband of the princess was no *bhakta* of God, and that he knew nothing about the importance of the devotion to Vishnu. 163. Thus while Ramābāi was a princess solely devoted to Vishnu, she had for a husband one in whose heart there was not a particle of devotion to God. 164. At her husband's house none performed the worship of Vishnu, none uttered the name of God, so how was the service of

saints possible there ? For all were full of sensual desires. 165. This state of things filled the heart of Ramābāi with anxiety, and she thought to herself, I have fallen into the company of the undevoted. What shall I do ? 166. Without looking for nine qualities my father married me to an undevoted house. This must have been in store for me as the result of my bad actions in my former lives. 167. In this way many days passed and then she was in the state of carrying and after the completion of nine months she had a beautiful son. 168. But although Ramābāi had a son, a husband and a house full of grain and wealth, still she was very sad at heart, and she said, ' O merciful one, O sporter in Vaikunth, I cannot pass a moment without Thee. 169. At heart I worship Thy feet and I have no other support but Thee. When art Thou going to comfort me by making these undevoted ones experience Thy presence ?' 170. This was the wish she cherished in her heart. Then after some time on the day of Hari (*Ekādashī*), her husband brought a goat into the house to be slaughtered. 171. But Ramābāi opposed him and said, ' Today is the day of Vishnu called *Ekādashī* and if one practises killing on this day he is sure to go to hell.' 172. Although she gave advice in many ways, the bad man did not listen to her, for a flesh-eater has no kindness at heart. 173. On the day of Hari (i. e., *Ekādashī*) with his own hands he slaughtered the goat, so Ramābāi was very much concerned and did not know what to do. 174. (In the world) a devoted one has to associate with one undevoted, and one full of love with another who is evil-minded; just as the dark Rāhu and the cool Moon accidentally meet. 175. In the same way Ramābāi was in a predicament. Then she sent a man into the town and told him to find out 176. whether any saints had arrived in the town that day. ' If they have, come quickly and tell me.' 177. The

servant roamed over the town and came back to say that some Vaishnav *bhaktas* had arrived in the town. Then Ramābāi obtained some poison and administered it to her own son. 178. After her unusual action she put the child into its cradle; it had already died and all knew this. 179. All the men in the house wept bitterly, but the child's mother was uttering the names of God with a quiet mind. 180. Then the king addressed the queen and said, 'Your heart is very hard, for I very much wonder why you do not weep at all.' 181. Then Queen Ramābāi said in reply, 'Why should one lament for what is perishable? Ultimately everything will perish; for we are deceived by illusion. 182. If Shri Hari looks upon us with an eye of mercy, all sorts of disturbance will vanish; and if the saints come to our house I will suggest to you the means (of bringing the child to life) at once.' 183. Then the king asked the queen, 'Tell me the means at once.' She answered, 'Wash the feet of the saints and put the holy water into the mouth of the dead child. 184. In this way alone will the child come to life.' The king then enquired, 'Where are the saints?' Ramābāi replied, 'They are encamped in the temple.' 185. While the king wondered at heart he had the Vaishnav *bhaktas* brought to his palace and with a devoted soul he worshipped the saints himself. 186. Then he himself drank of the holy water with which their feet had been washed and he put a little of it into the child's mouth, and its life at once returned as if it was awaking from sleep. 187. Seeing so wonderful an event, devotion came to the heart of the king, and he gave up all his bad inclinations and became a Vaishnav. 188. Every day he worshipped Vishnu and the Vaishnav *bhaktas*, listened to the *Harikīrtan*, and continually repeated the names of God. 189. The will-power of Ramābāi had been very great, for she had killed her child by poison, but in her hard experience the

Husband of Rukminī was pleased with her, and showed her this great miracle.

THE STORY OF RĀMRĀJĀ

190. There is also a delightful story of Rāmrajā. He was very pious and he worshipped Shri Rāma and enjoyed the happiness that arises from love to God. 191. In his contemplation and in his heart there was always the Dweller of Ayodhyā (i. e., Rāma), and his tongue was ever busy day and night in repeating the name of Rāma. 192. He listened only to those *kīrtans* in which the power of Rāma was described, but he would not listen to the carrying away of Sitā, for on that account Rāma was roaming over the forest. 193. Knowing therefore the minds of the host, the reader of the *Purāṇ* read only the desired events and when the Pundit became afflicted with a disease, he advised his son in the following manner: 194. 'The king does not like the carrying away of Sitā, therefore you read some other story to him.' 'Surely,' said he to his father, and then went to the palace. 195. But he did not remember the instruction which his father had given him, and he unwrapped the book of the *Rāmāyana* and commenced reading about the carrying away of Sitā, 196. about Shri Rāma living in Panchavati (in Nasik), about the cunning demon taking the illusory form of a gold antelope, 197. about how good Sitā with her hands joined palm to palm and requested Shri Rāma thus, 'Kill this antelope at once and make me a bodice of its skin,' 198. and knowing the future, Raghuvu (i. e., Rāma) took his bow and arrow and went after the antelope in the forest to kill it; 199. but then Rāvan (the demon) came there to beg as a *samjāsī* and took away Jānaki (i. e., Sitā). Hearing this narrative the king fell into a rage; 200. and as the reader of the *Purāṇ* described the carrying away of Sitā, the king was very

much excited. Then calling his State Minister he ordered him to get ready the army. 201. Receiving this order the royal army with their arms arrived there at once. 202. Rāmrāyā then said, 'Rāvan has carried away Sītā and has gone to Lankā (Ceylon), therefore let us all follow him.' 203. Having thus ordered his brave soldiers the king came to the sea coast and at once entered the ocean in order to kill the ten-headed demon (Rāvan). 204. Seeing his devotion Raghuvir was in a great difficulty, so taking Sītā in his arms he appeared before him immediately. 205. Then Raghupati said to Rāmrāyā, 'This Sītā was carried away by Rāvan but I hastened after him and have redeemed her. 206. I killed the ten-headed demon with an arrow. Then why do you think of going to Lankā (i. e., Ceylon) now? I do not see any reason.' 207. As Raghunandan said this he (Rāmrāyā) felt comforted at heart, and coming out of the ocean he worshipped the Life of Jānakī (i. e., Rāma). 208. Such was his loving *bhakti*; he had stored in his heart Shri Raghupati (i. e., Rāma), then taking along with him his army and treasury he returned to his capital. 209. For the acquisition of God, one's resolve is the chief factor and there is a story describing this. O ye pious good people, listen to it.

THE STORY OF NARAHARIDĀS OF JAGANNATH

210. A person named Naraharidās had been brought up at Jagannāth. He always sang the praises of God with love, and his mind was absorbed in the form of God. 211. In him there lived the sixty-four arts incarnate, and he could act the many *avatārs* of Shri Hari. 212. By the great mercy of God he had His manifestation, for he had made masks for different characters and with the help of these he acted the *avatārs* of God. 213. Once he performed *lalita* (or dramatic performance) among the

company of his friends, relatives and other Vaishnav *bhaktas* with the help of singing and of musical instruments. Listen to the wonderful event which then happened. 214. He took the part of the Narasinha *avatār* while another played the part of Hiranyakashyapu, and he (Narahari) came out of a pillar breaking it. 215. As Pralhād was thinking of him he tore open the paper pillar, and when taking Hiranyakashyapu crosswise he really killed him. 216. With his artificial paws he tore open his belly, and taking away the intestines he put them around his neck; as the people watched this there was a great uproar of sorrow. 217. For it was like the drowning of Airāvāt (i. e., Indra's elephant) in the flood of a mirage; or like an army in a dream conquering its king; 218. or like one acting the (impossible) part of the sage Agastī and having to drink up the ocean; or like using a mere wooden adamant to crush a mountain to pieces; 219. or like the serpent of rope that bit king Parikshiti; or like the stone image of Maruti that jumped and swallowed up the sun; 220. or like the fire in a picture that burnt away the Khāndav forest, such was today's event; so all the people said. 221. Some remarked, 'These two were enemies in their former births, and therefore in taking a fictitious part the one killed the other.' 222. The relatives of the man who was dead having reported the matter from beginning to end to the king, 223. the latter said, 'Cremate the dead body, and then we shall sit in judgment on the killer, and see how he accomplished his enmity, and finally pass our judgment.' 224. As the king said this, the dead body was cremated; and Narahari was taken care of by his brothers, for the other party was eager for vengeance. 225. Then the king devised the plan of giving to Narahari the part of King Dashrath; and he watched the wonderful result. 226. To some other beautiful children he gave the part of Rāma and Laksh-

man and to a woman who was passionate by nature was given the part of the evil-minded Kaikeyī. 227. The *Haridās* performed the *kīrtan* in singing with the help of musical instruments, and for his theme he had chosen a piece from the *Bālkānd* of the *Rāmāyana* composed by Valmiki. 228. As Raghunāth (i. e., Rāma) was seated on the throne, Kaikeyī said to Dashrath, 'You have given me a promise, oh king ; please recollect it now. 229. I only ask of you this much, that you send Rāma and Lakshman to the forest and give the throne to my son, Bharat, who possesses a good character. ' 230. Understanding the wish of Kaikeyī, Raghunāth (i. e., Rāma) went into exile ; and just then the man who was playing the part of Dashrath loudly lamented. 231. He said to Kaikeyī, 'Take the whole of the kingdom, but do not send my dear Raghunāth (i. e., Rāma) into the forest.' 232. As Rāma heard this he bowed to Dashrath, and having taken Lakshman and Sitā along with him he started for the forest. 233. At this the counterfeit part of Dashrath bitterly lamented and rolled on the ground saying, 'O my darling Raghunāth, you are going far, far away. 234. Shri Rāma is my very life, Shri Rāma is my secret store, Shri Rāma is my rest, and now he is leaving me. 235. Shri Rāma is to me the image of the great Brahm itself; Shri Rāma is my internal flame; without Shri Rāma all the ten directions are void. 236. Shri Rāma is my dear mother and father; Shri Rāma is my very soul; Kaikeyī is angry with him but has made me the cause of this grief. 237. O Shri Rāmachandra, I have none in the world without Thee, without Shri Rāma I have no other, neither mother, father, brother, nor sister. 238. Listening to the evil suggesion of Kaikeyī, Shri Rāma has gone into the forest. When he may return I surely do not know. 239. Shri Rāma is the life of my life; he left me here and has gone into the forest; what is the

good of living now ?' When he had said this he gave up his life. 240. Having acted his part in this way at the time, the people came near him and saw there was no sign of life. 241. As they felt his body it was not at all warm, and they said, 'Having in his heart the form of Shrī Rāma he has attained the state of *sāyujya* (final salvation). 242. And we have witnessed the action in consonance with the part.' Then the Vaishnav *munis* showered flowers on the dead body. 243. For while the saints are in the world, doubters and haters censure them, but when they are dead and gone, people praise them; such is the way of the world.

244. This book of the *Bhaktalīlāmrit* should be considered as the ocean; where the God of gods, the Husband of Lakshmi, lives. 245. The Life of the world reclines on the serpent Anant (i. e., Shesha). His qualities are innumerable and illimitable, and Mahīpati is his bard, singing of His good qualities in the *kīrtans*.

246. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmrit* and by merely listening to it one's desires are fulfilled. May the pious and loving *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the forty-second delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XLIII

VOGARĀSĀ, HARIĀNANDA, RĀMCHANDRA BHAT.
SUHĀGSHĀH, PANHĀJĪ, JAYAMALLA,
AND SHRĪDHARPANT

GOD'S ACTIONS ARE UNFATHOMABLE

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Even if it were possible to shut up the uncontrollable wind in the sky, still the actions of Shri Hari are without a limit. 2. It may be even possible to some one to find out how much water the ocean contains, but the lives of the saints cannot be described at full length. 3. Even could one enumerate the grass blades on the earth, yet one's heart is witness to the fact that the lives of saints are beyond one's ken. 4. Dull as I am, I only chatter on the authority of ancient poets, and my mind assures me with evidence that I do not possess any talents myself. 5. A blind man follows the sound of the footfall of a man endowed with eyes; it is in the same way that the construction of this book is being arranged; may the fortunate good people understand this. 6. Shri Vitthal who resides on the bank of the Bhimā river likes the lives of the saints, and he has put me to the front as his instrument; in fact it is the lotus-eyed one himself who narrates them. 7. He supported the Govardhan mountain on the tip of His nail, but He gave the glory to the cowherds; in the same way is it with this work, as the wise ones understand.

8. In the last chapter there was the interesting story how Yashodā had fastened Shri Krishna and how (when hearing that story) Premābāi breathed her last, thinking of the *sagun* form of God; 9. also how the Recliner on Shesha was pleased with Shilābai, Premābāi, and Ramābāi, seeing their sincere devotion for him; 10. also how Rām-

rājā, hearing the narration in the *Rāmāyaṇ* that Sitā was carried away (by Rāvan), jumped into the ocean; and finally, how Narahari died while acting the part of Dashrath.

THE STORY OF THE GROCER VOGARĀSĀ

11. There was a grocer by name Vogarāsā who was endowed with great knowledge and was very pious; in love he sang the praises of Hari and was righteous. 12. His wife, too, was very chaste and she could read the mind of her husband; he served the *sādhus* and saints with devotion, and had discarded every earthly attachment. 13. It was his firm belief that the soul in all beings is one, and he looked on the whole universe as himself. 14. He always remembered the names of Shri Ramkrishna, Hari and Govind; he was always at a pinch for food and raiment, but he did not give up righteousness. 15. Although his earthly means were so poor, he fed ten men every day, and through the merit of his righteousness he was in possession of good actions. 16. In order to test him, the Lord of Vaikunth came to his house in the form of a *sādhu*, standing in the yard and asking the mistress of the house, 17. 'Where has Vogarā gone? I have come to his house to meet him.' As the Saviour of the world asked this she replied that he had gone to the market. 18. She then gave him a seat and bowed to him with true devotion saying, 'My husband will return tomorrow; so make yourself at home.' 19. Hearing her reply, *Shārangdhar* (i. e., Krishna) said, 'I am very hungry and therefore I have come here very eagerly. 20. I have heard your reputation that you give food to the hungry, therefore, oh mother, do the cooking soon and satisfy me.' 21. As *Chakrapāni* (i. e., Vishnu) said this the mistress of the house replied, 'Surely.' But in the house there was not a particle of grain, and she

began thinking what to do. 22. She said to herself, 'If I do not give him food; our good reputation will suffer.' Now she had a nose ornament containing a small bit of gold, so she took that to the market. 23. Giving it to the goldsmith she received a little money in return and bought food provisions with it and started the cooking. 24. When the cooking was finished, the good woman served the food on a plate, and calling the Vaishnav guest she fed him. 25. He who does not accept the sacrificial oblation offered Him in sacrifice even by great *rishis*, He, the Soul of the world, assuming the form of a Vaishnav, dined there. 26. Said Shri Hari, 'I have been without food for many days, therefore I came to your house; and I had food to my satisfaction.' 27. The Husband of Rukmini ate as much food as was cooked in the house, and then he belched (as a sign of satisfaction) and received water for cleaning his hands. 28. The mistress of the house gave him leaves of *tulsī* for cleaning the mouth; and although there was no food left for her, she felt satisfied. 29. Knowing her mind, the Husband of Lakshmi was pleased with her; he then went into the central apartment, and there buried in the ground an earthen pot. 30. He told her, 'This contains a good deal of money. Take as much as you like whenever you need it, and spend it as the *sādhus* and saints come to your house.' 31. After saying this, Shri Hari vanished out of sight then and there; and when Vagarāsā returned home, she told him everything that had happened. 32. She said, 'When you had gone to the market, a *sādhu* came to our house, and I sold the ornament of my nose, in order to give him food. 33. When he was going he buried an earthen pot in the house and told me to take as much money from it as I liked any time. 34. After saying this to me, he at once departed.' As Vagarāsā heard what she said he was very much astonished. 35. Her husband being a *bhakta* of Vishnu

and free from all desires he did not look into the earthen pot ; but on a certain day many Vaishnav sages came to his house. 36. As there was no money in the whole place he was in a difficulty ; therefore he went and looked into the pot that was buried in the house 37. As the mistress of the house put her hand into the pot she could feel many *mohars* and *hons*, gold and silver coins. At this she was very astonished and with the money she satisfied the *sādhus* and saints. 38. Vogarāsā said to his wife, ' He, surely, was not a Vaishnav but the Lord of Vaikunth Himself. How was it you were so bewildered as not to worship Him ? 39. Shri Hari showed Himself to you before He did to me. Now to live is useless.' After this he began to weep. 40. Then with a heart full of emotion he began to plead with God in love. " Victory ! Victory to Thee ! Oh Lord of Vaikunth, Thou alone pervadest all the three worlds. 41. Espousing the cause of Thy *bhaktas*, Thou didst assume many *avatārs*. Come and let me see Thee in the same way ; my eyes are longing to see Thee.' 42. The Lord of Vaikunth, seeing the love of His *bhakta*, at once manifested Himself, and the image of God was beautiful to look at with His four arms adorned with a shell and disc. 43. Around His waist there was the divine yellow robe and crocodile earrings in His ears ; around His neck were garlands of *tulsī* blossom, and His face shone beautifully. 44. At the sight of the beautiful form, Vogarāsā fell prostrate on the ground, and by means of his mental devotion he fed the Husband of Rukminī. 45. Shri Hari entered the heart of His *bhakta*, and at his house thousands of Vaishnav *bhaktas* were fed daily.

THE STORY OF HARIĀNAND : A DISCIPLE OF RĀMĀNAND

46. Hariānand, a Vaishnav, was a real disciple of Rāmānand, and was ever in the act of worshipping Shri Hari ; his story is intensely delightful. 47. He considered

the whole moveable and immoveable universe as himself ; and he did not entertain any duality even in his dream : he was always full of love. 48. Many who became his disciples followed the path of devotion, and they performed worship properly with love. 49. He favoured one man with his initiatory *mantra* and sending him into the town to beg for food, the man got a seer of flour which he left with his *guru*. 50. By the favour of God a hundred Brāhmans were fed with it, and in this way many days rolled by and his mental emotions were absorbed in God. 51. One day a *sannyāsi* named Rāmānand Swāmī arrived in the neighbourhood with all his disciples. 52. The disciple of Hariānand had gone into the town to beg for food and he went to the lodging of Rāmānand and with true devotion made him a profound *namaskār*. 53. Seeing him, the great *yati* (or *sannyāsi*) said, ' He is the well-known disciple of Hariānand, and is devoted to the service of his *sadguru* ; but he possesses a very short life ; 54. for he is sure to die tomorrow afternoon. ' As the disciple heard what Rāmānand said, he was overpowered with anxiety. 55. Then he returned to his *sadguru* and told him everything saying, ' I went to the lodging of Rāmānand and made him a *namaskār*. 56. He looked at the lines on my hands and body and told the people around him, " Tomorrow in the afternoon he will surely die. " 57. Therefore anxiety has taken hold of me, and I am unfortunate that I possess a short life, for I have not served you as much as I should. So what shall I do ? ' 58. He had an intense desire for service in his heart, therefore tears began to flow down his face. The *guru* seeing him in this condition placed on his head his assuring hand, 59. and said, ' By the favour of Shri Hari the blow of death will miss you. Why do you feel concerned ? ' 60. At the end of that night when daylight had come, Hariānand bathed and performed his usual religious duties. 61. Making

the good disciple sit at his back, he then brought into his mind the Lord of the world, and saw before his eyes the same image which he was contemplating in his mind. 62. The *sagun* form was beautiful to look at, tender and with lotus eyes, and he wore around His waist the divine silken robe. As (Hariānand) saw the Sporter in Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu) with His four arms he lost his bodily consciousness. 63. He had in His ears the divine earrings and around His neck the Vaijayanti garland; in His hands He had the shell, disc, and other weapons, and the lustre of the Kaustubh jewel was so bright that it seemed as if the sun had risen. 64. On His chest was the *Śrīatsalānchhan* (i. e., the bruise on Vishnu's chest) and his hands reached his knees. Such was the Husband of Lakshmi, the Life of the world standing with His feet parallel in a tender and beautiful posture. 65. The image externally seen resembled exactly the form of the Lord of Vaikunth which Hariānand was contemplating in his mind with love. 66. His mind was absorbed in the *sagun* form of God, and so he had lost all bodily consciousness, when suddenly the messengers of death arrived there to take away the good disciple. 67. *Kāla* (i. e., death) can never force his way through the union of God and His *bhakta*, for the *Sudarshan* disc of God is revolving around His *bhakta* and there death's attempt becomes vain labour. 68. For three hours death was seeking an opportunity to carry him (the disciple) away. But his messengers were not able to obtain an entrance, and so they had to retire. 69. Then the good disciple requested his *guru*, 'Death has missed me; the sun is setting; therefore please come to consciousness.' 70. Hariānand's mind was concentrated on God, and he had lost all bodily consciousness; then having brought into his mind the *sagun* form

* See under 'Bhṛigu' in *Stories of Indian Saints*, Vol. 2, pp. 408, 431.

of God he opened his eyes. 71. The good disciple fell on his feet as he came to consciousness, and the next day he took his begging-bag and again went forth to beg. 72. As Rāmānand saw him he was very much astonished and he asked him how he was saved. The disciple related in detail what had happened. 73. Then the *saṁnyāsī* Rāmānand went to the house of Hariānand, and with true devotion made him a *namaskār* and lovingly greeted him. 74. He said, 'Through the power of *yoga*, I can avoid my own death : but I have not the power to save others.' 75. Then Hariānand with love replied, 'This is the result of the Swāmī's glory.' Rāmānand then returned to his lodging and gave himself up to the worship of *Parashottama* (i. e., Vishnu). 76. Even a *yogī* has to admit the superiority of *stṛiṅ bhakti*, for the Husband of Rukmini is earnestly desirous of devotion and he lets nothing be lacking.

THE STORY OF RĀMCHANDRA BHAT

77. O ye pious ones, listen to another wonderful life of a *bhakta* of God. There is on the bank of the Tāpi river a town called Amalāgaon where lived a Vaishnav *bhakta*. 78. His name was Rāmchandrābhat and he sang the praises of Shri Hari, being well-versed in the study of the *Vedas* and the *Śāstras*, and was free from desires. 79. He looked on gold, earth and stone alike and considered diamonds as mere stones ; evil desire never arose in his mind. 80. In his house he worshipped fire and other gods ; he begged for his food, and although he was the priest of the king he never went to his palace. 81. On one occasion the queen thought of giving him some money, so she sent for Rāmchandrābhat's wife. 82. She gave her own jewelled ornaments to her and requested her not to refuse them, and bowed to her with true devotion. 83. Rāmchandrābhat's wife returned to her house with those ornaments, and as the husband saw them, he rebuked her. 84. He said to his wife, 'Why have you brought this hindrance

to our house ? If we wish for these, then Shri Hari will be away from us.' 85. As soon as she heard these words of her husband she took all the jewelled ornaments and threw them into the consecrated fire. 86. As his wife became free from hindrances, Rāmchandrābhat was very pleased and someone made a report of the event to the king. 87. On hearing this the king went to the house of the family priest and said, 'Oh Swāmī, return to me the ornaments which you received from us.' 88. At this most critical moment he prayed to the God of sacrifices earnestly and all the jewelled ornaments came out of it. 89. The jewels and pearls looked more lustrous than before, and seeing this miracle the king fell prostrate at his feet. 90. On this the family priest said, 'Take back all these ornaments.' The king replied, 'I will not take back what I have once given in charity. 91. In order to see the miracle, I put the Swāmī to a little trouble.' Then Rāmchandrābhat collected some beggars and distributed those ornaments amongst them. 92. With freedom from desires, with peace, and with indifference to worldly things, he sang in love the praises of Shri Hari; such is the incomparable state of the saints, that the intellect is wearied in describing it.

THE STORY OF SUHĀGSHĀH OF ĀHMADĀBĀD

93. In Ahmadābād there was a noble *bhakta* named Suhāgshāh, a eunuch, but deeply absorbed in the form of Hari. 94. There are three kinds of people : the male, the female and the impotent; there is also the fourth kind which with impotence follows the gestures of a woman, such a person finds out a beautiful person and then has sexual connection with him. 95. Although Suhāgshāh acted as a woman, he did not look at any man except as the Lord of the Universe whom he contemplated in his mind, and held him fast in the casket of his heart. 96. As he looked on

the form with four arms and the yellow robe, with hands endowed with shell and disc and with an enticing face, he became quiet at heart. 97. The *Guru* of the world who is the Rest of the Soul, is the refuge of all beings. At the very utterance of His name all trouble arising from the worldly life is dispelled. 98. The Lord of Vaikunth who is the *Guru* of the world, pervades all the four classes of people, viz., a woman, a man, an impotent one and a eunuch. 99. Although he pervades all beings, he is not touched by anyone's actions. Suhāgshah contemplated Him, the Husband of Lakshmī and the Recliner on Shesha. 100. Men of his class went for a round in the town, but he never accompanied them; he always stayed at home and thought of Shri Hari at heart. 101. He said, 'If I go out to roam, I shall see many men, and my mind will be excited by lust, and will run after them.' 102. Therefore with a concentrated mind he always uttered the names of God, and thought of the form of Shri Vishnu with a lustful desire. 103. Intense concentration is possible on the thought of lust or enmity; therefore, knowing his (Suhāgshāh's) intense attachment, God manifested Himself to him. 104. The Lord of the Universe always met him in His *sagun* form; and as his heart was full of the contemplation of God, his mind was quieted in love (for God). 105. Once upon a time there was a famine in the land, when for want of food men went to the house of death, 106. All looked up in the sky wishing for rain, just as a *chātak* bird wistfully looks up when he is thirsty. 107. The king of that country practised some religious observances for rain and he had to fast for seven days. Then the Soul of the world spoke to him by way of a manifestation. 108. The Lord of gods, the Husband of Lakshmī, shows Himself in a dream to a worthy person, and so the Life of the world came to him in the garb of a Brāhman while he was asleep and told him: 109. 'Suhāgshāh is a true *bhakta* of

mine; he is staying at the house of eunuchs, and with pity and good devotion he has conquered the Sporter in Vaikunth. 110. Leaving aside your greatness, and without pride at heart, you go and supplicate Suhāgshāh, and make to him a prostrate bow. 111. The Protector of the Universe, Shri Hari, will surely be pleased and will send rain on earth. 112. But if you have the least pride, rain will not fall at all.' After this manifestation the king got up; 113. and explaining his dream to the people he said, 'While I was observing a religious vow the Lord of Vaikunth knew of it, 114. and Shri Hari came in my dream as a Brāhman and told me, "The eunuch Suhāgshāh is in the town; go and prostrate yourself before him. 115. If you hesitate at all, then the clouds will not shower rain on earth." Such was the dream I had. What should I do?' 116. When the king asked this question the great men in the town replied, "The whole earth is in trouble for want of rain, therefore please go and make him a prostrate *namaskār*.' 117. Going with his officials the king then came to the house of eunuchs and said to Suhāgshāh, 'I saw a dream at night, 118. telling me that at your command the clouds will pour down on earth at once, therefore, have pity on the people and please listen to our request.' 119. In this way the king pleaded with his hands joined palm to palm, and without any sense of pride he prostrated himself before him. 120. The king thus having become a suppliant before that deserving person (Suhāgshāh) the latter answered, 'Oh God, why art Thou increasing this hindrance? 121. For I bear the worst character of all beings. I am low of caste and I do not know in which way Thou wilt favour me.' 122. Saying this in his mind, he descended into the yard and turned his face to the sky but no rain came. 123. Then he closed his eyes and prayed in his heart to the image of Shri Vishnu, 'Victory! victory to Thee, the Ocean of mercy, the Lord of

Vaikunth. Thou art the only Pervader of the three worlds. 124. Victory ! victory to the Mine of mercy, merciful to His *bhaktas*, the Ocean of mercy, Brother of the helpless and Saviour of the lowly, the Lord of all, and the Primal Being. 125. Why didst Thou give a manifestation to the king and thus increase my hindrances ? Why dost Thou not come to their help now ? Tell me at once, oh God of gods. ' 126. In this way he pleaded with God, but even yet the Lord of Vaikunth was not pleased ; so with his heart full of anger he addressed God in the following way : 127. ' From this day forth I will not love Thee. ' Then taking the nose ornament from off his nose he began to break the bracelets on his wrists. 128. Seeing such a resolve the Saviour of the world at once was pleased, for the clouds began to pour heavy rain, and the people shouted a cry of victory. 129. The drought had lasted for a long time, but now it rained for fourteen days, day and night, and the whole earth was covered with water. 130. The officials of the country then came to Suhāgshāh and requested him to ask for something of them. 131. The *bhakta* of Vishnu replied, ' I have no desire in my mind, for I look on gold and on mere earth alike. 132. I contemplate at heart Shri Hari, and all the *Siddhis* (the accomplishments personified) are my slaves. What can human beings give me ? ' Such was his reply. 133. He added, ' You had the manifestation of God and thereby you increased my hindrances among the people. Now I will go and bury myself alive and give up this perishable body. ' 134. At his order therefore the officials dug a pit while he (Suhāgshāh) contemplated at heart the Recliner on Shesha (i. e., Vishnu) ; and listen to what he did. 135. He stood in the grave, and thought ' in his heart of the image of Shri Vishnu, when the beautiful Shripati with four arms came to meet him. 136. As Suhāgshāh was going to take *samūlhi* the news spread everywhere ; many

people came and assembled there and threw on him flowers and fragrant black powders. 137. The Vaishnavs began to sing of the qualities of God with cymbals, *vinās* and drums, and meanwhile Suhāgshāh was requesting the people to listen to him. 138. 'If you adopt my way of life your earthly trouble will be destroyed.' But though he told the people of his way, none of them thought about it; 139. for his appearance seemed to them blameworthy, therefore none accepted his teaching. Just then, however, a humble and weak person arrived on the spot, and prostrated himself before Suhāgshāh, 140. and said, 'Favour me and destroy my earthly life which is too hard to be borne.' Understanding his heart he gave the man the initiatory *mantra* of worship, 141. and taking the bracelets from off his wrists, Suhāgshāh put them on to the other man; whose nose he also pierced and in the hole thus made the nose ornament was fixed; this same custom is still in vogue. 142. Thinking of the form of Shri Hari, Suhāgshāh thus sat in the tomb; in this way does *Chakrapān* (i. e., Vishnu) increase the reputation of his *bhaktas*. 143. That *Guru* of the world, the Merciful to the lowly, does not look to one's caste or race; nor does he think of a bad or a good time, but He comes at the needed moment to the help of His *bhaktas*.

THE STORY OF PANHĀJĪ THE RAJPUT

144. Listen to another delightful life with respect, O pious *bhaktas*. In the Gurjar country (i. e., Gujarat) there was a Rajput by name of Panhaji. 145. The King of Dongarpurvāsvāde was by name Khumānsing and he witnessed a miracle. 146. Panhājī Rajput was in his service and was very faithful, day and night being beside the king's bed. 147. For the maintenance of his family he served the king faithfully, but in his mind he thought of the image at Dwārakā. 148. At all times he

repeated the names of God and never told a lie. In this way many days passed and he witnessed the manifestation of God. 149. On the new moon day at *Dīpāvali* (a Hindu festival of illuminations in autumn) the king observed the festival of illuminations, and towards midnight he returned to his palace overcome by sleep. 150. Seeing the king come near, Panhāji at once got up and taking the end of his own coat into his hands he at once rubbed it. 151. Seeing this strange action the king asked Panhāji, ' Why did you rub the end of your coat ? Tell me the truth. ' 152. The Vaishnav *bhakta* answered, ' There is going on at Dwārkā the festival of illuminations ; and just now a very great calamity arose. Just think of it ! 153. After the priests had put many garments and ornaments on the image of Shri Krishna, the garment on the god was set on fire from the burning camphor ; 154. I could see it from here, and therefore, O lord and king, I put the fire out. ' Hearing this story, the king was very much astonished in his mind. 155. and he asked Panhāji all about the garments on the god : " Tell me, and we will get the matter verified tomorrow. " 156. He replied, ' The god is wearing at this time green garments on him, and to my sight the image of the god appears very beautiful. ' 157. The king of Rabadā was Khumānsing's sister-in-law's husband and his great friend, so Khumānsing himself wrote him this letter : 158. ' At Dwārkā on the night of *Dīpāvali* what took place in the temple of Vishnu and what calamity happened ? Please tell us in writing. 159. How did the priests worship God ? Of what colour were the garments on the god ? Write to us in detail all about this. ' 160. In this way Khumānsing wrote the letter and sent it by a messenger, and when the king of Rabadā read it he sent this reply : 161. ' On the day of *Dīpāvali* there were the illuminations and after half the night had passed there took place the

offering of camphor-burning. 162. The garments on the god were green, and were very fine. Just under the end of the coat the burning camphor set it on fire. 163. Panhāji Rajput was just at that time near the god, and with his own hands he rubbed the garment and put out the fire.' 164. When King Khumānsing received this reply he considered it to be a miracle, and coming to Panhāji he devotedly made him a profound *namaskār*. 165. Said he, 'You are a Vishnu *bhakta* and you have a manifestation of God; this I say from experience. It is not right that you should in future serve *me*, 166. for with all your heart, you should serve the Dweller of Ayodhyā who is truth, mind and joy.' Having said this the king gave him for his maintenance the revenue of two towns; 167. and the *bhakta* Panhāji for ever sang the praises of God with devotion; and giving up the royal service he stayed at Dwārakā.

THE STORY OF PRINCE JAYAMALLA

168. In Medatā there was a noble Vaishnav, a king by name of Jayamalla who had a great liking for the worship of Vishnu and worshipped Him in all the prescribed ways. 169. For three hours the king sat in seclusion, having given orders that no one should disturb him; 170. so out of fear of the king, none entered the house of the god where the king worshipped the image in all the various ways before he came outside. 171. Repeating the names of God, he said ever and anon, '*Sāvalā, Sāvalā*' (or, the most beautiful one, i. e., the god). The king had a younger brother who was bent on taking his share of the kingdom, 172. and he did not like to remain with the king; so he got angry and went to a distant country and there collected a large army and invaded Medatā. 173. The bad man came there to fight at the time when he knew the king was worshipping

Vishnu. So the Minister of Jayamalla fought with him and the battle was very fierce. 174. But the enemy was not beaten, and the Minister was forced to run away. Approaching the mother of the king he told her what had happened, 175. saying, 'The enemy is very powerful; what remedy should now be adopted? The king is busy in worshipping Vishnu; therefore I cannot go and report the event to him.' 176. As the Minister said this the mother of the king went into the house of the god and reported the news to Jayamalla and asked him what course was to be followed. 177. As he was in the act of worshipping he did not say anything in reply to his mother; he simply said, '*Sāvalā*'. Listen therefore to what the Life of the world did. 178. He said, 'The king is absorbed in my contemplation and therefore I must myself accomplish his purpose.' Then *Chakrapāni* (i. e., Vishnu) assumed a *saṅga* form, and rode on a horse. 179. *Shūraṇḍhar* (i. e., Vishnu) went out of the gate of the town and fought a fierce battle and put to flight the enemy's army. 180. From the wall of the town men and women were watching the event, and wondering who he could be who had put to flight the enemy so completely. 181. *Chakrapāni* (i. e., Vishnu) had bound the enemy of Jayamalla hand and foot and had brought him into the stable and left him there. Then the Giver of salvation had vanished out of sight. 182. When the king Jayamalla had completed his worship of Vishnu at leisure he came out, and his Minister told him about the war in detail, saying, 'Some man came there, 183. and fought very fiercely (on our side) and put the army of the enemy to flight and has brought your brother bound.' 184. The king felt very much astonished and exclaimed, 'This is no doubt the action of *Sāvalā*.' For my sake *Chakrapāni* (i. e., Vishnu) has put himself to trouble today.' 185. Then with his own lips he praised the Life of the world

‘Thou dost give a direct vision of Thyself to my brother. What fault have I committed?’ Then he fasted for five days. 186. The Dweller in Vaikunth seeing his resolve then met him in his *sagun* form, and the brother repented and said, ‘In vain did I behave inimically towards you.’ 187. Jayamalla setting his brother free honoured him with a robe and said, ‘*Hrishīkeshu* (i.e., Vishnu) gave you a sight of Himself; your fortune is indeed without limit.’ 188. The brother then gave up all hostile conduct and took to the worship of Vishnu, for without some trouble, repentance does not come to the heart.

THE STORY OF THE BRĀHMAN SHRĪDHARPANT

189. Listen with reverence to yet another delightful story of a saint, O pious *bhaktas*. There was a Brāhman by name of Shridharpant and in his heart there was a firm belief in God. 190. He was simple, pious and loving and he always sang the praises of God. His wife also had a pure heart and the One dark as a cloud (i.e., Vishnu) was pleased with them. 191. If anyone jokingly smiled he took it as real. Once he took his wife with him and started on a pilgrimage. 192. Seating his wife on a horse he drove the animal himself and the jewellery of his wife and the money needed for the expenses of the journey were with him, as they went through a forest. 193. Robbers overtaking him began to walk in his company, and a great fear arose in his mind when his wife said to him, 194. ‘The sun is setting and we are in a lonely forest; I feel nervous, therefore let us go back.’ 195. The thieves putting on a gentle air said to Shridhar, ‘Why do you entertain any fear when you are in our company?’ 196. But he replied, ‘I cannot trust you, please give some proof (of your good character); then will my fear disappear.’ The thieves then answered, 197. ‘Between us both there is the great *Ātmārāma* (i.e., God);

and the Lord of gods, Purushottam, dispels the troubles of His *bhaktas*.' 198. As they gave this proof by quoting God's name, the husband and wife became full of trust, but as they were travelling what did these evil men do? 199. They talked of spiritual things but enticed Shridhar away and murdered him by cutting off his head. 200. The villains then ran off with both the jewellery and the wife; and when she understood the event she began to look over her shoulders every moment. 201. The thieves asked her, 'We have killed your husband, now tell us at once why you keep looking behind?' 202. As the wicked men said this, the good woman said in reply, 'Between us there stood Rāma, the Lord of Ayodhyā, 203. and believing in him, my husband has gone to the home of death; so I was looking behind to know whether Rāma had come or not. 204. For He is the witness of the heart, the very image of all intelligence who pervades all beings; I am waiting for the Lord of Ayodhyā, the Husband of Jānakī, 205. who killed the ten-headed demon, and freed the gods from incarceration, that Advocate of His *bhaktas*, and the Giver of salvation; I am waiting for Him, 206. Who assumed many an *avatār* for the love of his *bhaktas*. Where is that Raghuvira, (i. e., Rāma) engaged? Has He forgotten me?' 207. As the lady thus spoke, Shri Rāma appeared on the spot with a bow and an arrow in his hands and killed the thieves. 208. Raghunāth (i. e., Rāma) went where the dead body of her husband was lying, and the Soul of the world looked at it with his nectar sight and raised him with His own hands. 209. Raghuvira (i. e., Rāma) accompanied them until they had reached a passable road, but as soon as they were on the right way, He disappeared. 210. God assumes many *avatārs* out of pride for His *bhaktas*, and He wields in His hands the mace and disc in order to destroy the wicked. 211. That *Achyt*, *Anant*, Shri Hari plays

various parts, and by the support of His blessing of assurance Mahipati commits to paper His pure fame. 212. *Swasti* (Peace) ! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmrit*. By merely listening to it the heart's desires are fulfilled. May the pious and loving *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the forty-third delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XLIV

HARIPĀLA, JASŪ, DHANAJĀTA, SUKHĀNANDA, AND MĀDHAVDĀS

THE SACRED RIVERS LISTEN TO THE STORIES OF SAINTS

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. The sacred rivers, Godāvarī, Yamunā, Saraswatī, Krishnā, Tungabhadrā, Bhāgīrathī, Chandrabhāgā and the Bhīmarathī (i. e., Bhīmā) come with love to the praise-service of God; 2. also the rivers, Tāpī, Mahī, Pravarā, Narmadā (Nerbudda) Gomatī, Venyā, Nīrā, Kakudmī, and the sacred watering pond of Pushkar and Kushāvarta which is dear to Shankar (i. e., Shiva); 3. the celestial Mandākinī, and the Bhogavatī of the nether land; all these rivers come along with the other religious festivals to the praise-singing service of God, and become purified. 4. Also many other sacred waters on the earth which are famous in the *Purāns*, come to the place where the stories of *bhaktas* are being read. 5. Many *sādhus* and saints come with love to listen to the stories and they naturally have a bath of repentance at this time.

6. At the end of the last chapter it was related how the thieves killed Shridhar and as his wife looked over her shoulders Rāmchandra suddenly came to her help; 7. with a bow and arrow in His hand, the Husband of Jānaki killed the thieves, and mercifully brought Shridhar back to life.

THE STORY OF THE VAISHNAV HARIPĀLA

8. There is another sweet and delightful story of a wealthy Vaishnav; his name was Haripāla; listen to it, with reverence, oh pious and loving *bhaktas*. 9. He was filled with devotion at the feet of saints and the Vaishnav *bhakta* worshipped Hari with love; indeed he considered as gods the saints whom others look upon as ordinary

men. 10. When any Vaishnav *bhakta* came to the town he went to receive him and bowing to him he took him to his house. 11. He worshipped him with all the forms of worship, gave him the food he had longed for, and offered him garments, ornaments and adornments as his means permitted him. 12. While serving the saints in this way he expended all his fortune, and having no other resources he was at a loss to understand what to do? 13. Hearing his reputation of former days Vaishnavs came to his house, and if they went away disappointed his reputation suffered. 14. With this thought in his mind he devised the plan of assuming the garb of a highway man and plundering travellers. 15. First he frightened them and then plundered them of their wealth, but as he had a compassionate heart he did not kill anyone. 16. If he saw anyone in the garb of a saint he did not trouble him, but he plundered the belongings of all other travellers. 17. In this way he served the saints and said, 'May the merit of this my service to the saints go to them whose money I plunder.' 18. He was without any sense of pride, and thus there rolled on many days when there happened a very strange event; listen to it, oh pious good people. 19. One day when many saints came to see him there was not a particle of food in his house, and with an anxious heart he went into the forest. 20. Taking with him a bow and arrow he lay in wait for travellers, but as he saw no one he felt very much concerned. 21. Said he to himself, 'What shall I do? For the saints will have no food.' Just then the God of gods, the Lord of Vaikunth, showed him a miracle. 22. In the dress of a rich person, *Shārangdhar* (i.e., Vishnu) sat in a cart, with the beautiful Rukminī and arrived on the spot. 23. As Haripāla noticed Him he was very pleased, and placing his arrow on the bow he came to him and said, 24. 'Give me whatever money you may

have, or I will take your life.' The Life of the world pleaded for compassion but he would not listen. 25. The Lord of Vaikunth always entertains great awe for His *bhaktas*, and so the Soul of the world gave him all his garments, ornaments and wealth. 26. Haripāla took off all the ornaments of Rukminī and after he had also plundered the god he returned home. 27. Then he fed the Vaishnavs with excellent food and Rukminī said to Shri Hari, 'What is to be done now?' 28. Your *bhakta* has pilfered all my garments and ornaments.' Hari replied, 'But he has obliged us by not taking our lives; you surely ought to remember this kindness of his; 29. for making the service of the saints his plea, he plunders travellers of their wealth.' Then Rukminī said, 'Show me now the condition of his life; 30. as I want to go quickly and see what love he has for the feet of the saints, his worship and his devotion to them.' The Lord of Vaikunth agreed. 31. Then with love the Life of the world assumed the garb of a saint; he put garlands of *tulsī* leaves around his neck, and applied the *Gopīchandan* (i. e., the verticle mark of a Vaishnav) to His forehead. 32. As *Chakrapānī* (i. e., Vishnu) played the part of a saint, Rukminī assumed the garb of a female mendicant, and arriving at the house of Haripāla they shouted loudly, 'Sītā Rāma.' 33. When he saw them he fell prostrate at their feet, gave them seats and worshipped them with devotion. 34. Then he prepared plates and seated them to dine. With the meal, *Chakrapānī* (i. e., Vishnu) was satisfied, and then they had *tulsī* leaves to cleanse their mouths; 35. after which he exclaimed, 'Blessed is this day. The Swāmi has come to my house and with an eye of mercy has given me a sight of him. 36. If you have any other wish, please tell me of it.' Then the Recliner on Shesha said in reply to him, 37. 'As I was coming to meet you a thief met me on the way, and as I am a man with a

great fortune he plundered me of everything. 38. He also plundered the garments and ornaments we wore, and then we felt so dejected at heart that both of us have become mendicants.' 39. On this Haripāla replied, 'A thief has plundered you, so now I will search the whole forest for him and kill him.' 40. As he said this, Shri Hari performed a great wonder, for he at once changed Himself into His former self at which Haripāla felt ashamed. 41. He repented at heart greatly and from his eyes there streamed tears of love as he exclaimed, 'I have plundered Thee, Oh Lord of gods, the Husband of Rukmini; I plundered *Thee*! 42. Thou art the controller of *Kali* (the evil age) and *Kāla* (death). I was the veriest fool not to realise this, and yet fixed the arrow to kill Thee. 43. Thou art the Guru of the world, the Husband of Indirā (goddess of wealth). Thou Thyself didst become the rich man. This I did not know, being ignorant and sinful, and so I plundered Thee. 44. My heart gives evidence of my complete guilt; now, oh Brother of the lowly, Ocean of mercy, Saviour of the world, pardon me.' 45. The Husband of Rukmini smiled at the earnest pleading of Haripāla and said, 'You are absorbed in the service of the saints and thereby I am pleased.' 46. Haripāla brought out all the ornaments which he had plundered, and put them on Rukmini saying, 'I am Thy guilty child.' 47. Then *Chakrapānu* (i. e., Vishnu) discarded His garb of a wealthy person and embraced Haripāla with His four arms (as Vishnu). 48. Seeing his devotion was free from all desire, Shri Hari gave him this blessing: 'From to-day the *Siddhīs* (the accomplishments personified) will serve at your house as slaves; therefore you may happily continue your service of the saints.' 49. After saying this to him, the god vanished out of sight, and Haripāla continued in his service of the saints, for his house now had plentiful provisions of food

THE STORY OF THE FARMER JASŪ

50. There was a farmer by name of Jasū who was a very loving and pious *bhakta* of Vishnu. Lovingly he sang of the deeds of Shri Hari and had no liking for anything else. 51. He earned his livelihood by farming, and gave food to the hungry as his means permitted him. 52. He had two bullocks which were carried away by thieves at night, and as the Lord of Vaikunth found Himself in difficulty he created other bullocks. 53. Not knowing about this action of God, Jasū took the bullocks into the field, and when the thief saw him driving the plough he felt very much astonished at it. 54. So he went to see if the bullocks he had taken away were where he had fastened them and he found them there. The next night, he came and carried away the other bullocks: 55. but Shripati (i. e., Vishnu) again created two more bullocks; again the thieves were much astonished and in this way the thieves carried away the bullocks four times. 56. At last the thieves greatly repented at heart saying, ' The Lord of Vaikunth is his helper. We persecuted him and only paved a way to hell for ourselves.' 57. Having said this they fell at the feet of Jasūsāmī, and with their hearts full of repentance, they related everything to him. 58. Then with sole devotion they made supplications to him and became his disciples. They were at his service day and night and began to think of Vishnu.

THE STORY OF THE FARMER DHANAJATA

59. Oh pious *bhaktas*, listen to the delightful story of a *bhakta* of God, Dhanajāta the farmer. 60. When he was in his boyhood, some Vaishnavs came to his home, and seeing the worship they performed, he prostrated before them. 61. Joining his hands palm to palm, he said, ' Give me the *Shāligrāma* (i. e., a stone emblem.

of Vishnu) to worship.' Picking up a black stone they gave that to him, 62. and with great belief Dhanajāta worshipped it; seeing his devotion, Shri Hari manifested Himself then and there. 63. When he went to the meadow for grazing his cows Dhanajāta took his *Shāligrāma* with him, and bathed in water. 64. He offered wild flowers to the god, worshipped it with good devotion, and made an offering of food of the victuals he had, saying, 'Now eat, oh *Hrishikeshī* (i. e., Vishnu).' 65. Seeing his devotion, Shri Hari ate the dry bread, and Dhanajāta being pleased at heart, then ate the remaining bread. 66. From his boyhood he made the God of gods his friend. They did not forget each other and were happy in mutual love. 67. The noble Vaishnav, Dhanajāta, gradually grew to manhood; if he found any Vaishnavs hungry he gave them food. 68. One day he took his yoke and went to sow seed in the field, when he met a large number of mendicants on the way, who shouted loudly 'Sita Rāma.' 69. They said to Dhanajāta, 'We Vaishnavs are very hungry. We have heard your reputation that you give food to the hungry. 70. There is a famine in the land, and we do not see any other donor in the town, therefore, oh servant of Vishnu, satisfy us with food.' 71. As Dhanajāta heard them he remembered there was not a particle of grain in the house. Then he devised this plan: 72. He thought of getting the seed which he was carrying to sow in the field, and with that determination he went back home. 73. Then turning the wheat into flour he gave a dinner to the Vaishnavs. When the *sādhus* and saints were satisfied they uttered words of blessing: 74. 'The God of gods, the Husband of Rukmini, will be your helper for ever. Your reputation will never suffer diminution, but your fame will ring (through the world).' 75. Thus addressing him, the *sādhus* who were inhabitants of

sacred places went away, and Dhanajāta's mind felt satisfaction. 76. The people of the town censured him, saying, 'He acted unwisely. Blessed is he who can accomplish both the earthly and the spiritual purposes. 77. But as for him he has done business in which he has lost the capital itself; from personal experience we can say that this will not result in good.' 78. But though he was overwhelmed by censure he enjoyed many sips out of the ocean of peace. He said, 'I have put an end to my earthly life, and experienced the Lord of Vaikunth.' 79. The inmates of his house were very much concerned, for they did not know where to get seed to sow in the field, and being at a loss to know how the family would continue to live, they did not see any good (resulting from Dhanāji's actions). 80. As for Dhanāji himself, he was righteously inclined, saying, 'The earth which is without life gives crops; what then will not the saints do who are full of life?' 81. With this resolve in mind and with loud acclamations of love he was singing the praises of God, when a wonderful event took place; may the wise listen to it with reverence. 82. Ever merciful to His *bhaktas*, the Lord of Vaikunth Himself sowed seed in the field and the next day the people saw a crop of wheat growing there. 83. Wondering as they saw it the people said, 'Dhanajāta possesses loving devotion, so in his difficulty the Husband of Rukminī was pleased with him, and his fame has spread among the people.' 84. The field yielded an extraordinary crop and he used it all in a good cause, for he collected a number of Vaishnav *bairāgīs* (mendicants), and fed them.

THE STORY OF SUKHĀNANDA, THE BRĀHMAN

85. Oh pious *bhaktas*, listen to another delightful story about a Brāhman named Sukhānanda who was given to the worship of Hari. 86. If any Vaishnavs came to his

house, with true devotion he worshipped them, for he was a simple, pious and loving person, and he did not know of any other means of salvation. 87. He had a great love for the food offered to Vishnu and if anyone gave it to him he ate it at once. 88. His wife named Surasurī was also very pious, being very faithful to her husband; and respecting her husband's inclination she served the *sādhus* and saints. 89. Even if Sukhānanda had not bathed before anyone gave him the food offered to God, he at once ate it without any scruple in his mind. 90. He coveted nothing better than the favour of Hari, and this was the resolve of both husband and wife. 91. Then the crooked-minded and the revilers in the town unwisely thought of teasing him by saying, 'He has great faith in the favour of Hari, so let us put it to the test.' 92. Then they went into the market and bought *jīlbīs* and *radās* and coming to Sukhānanda they said to him, 93. 'We have been to the temple of Hari and have brought you this His favour.' Sukhānanda with joy at heart ate it with love. 94. The evil-minded laughed loudly as they saw him eating it, and they said, 'We bought the *jīlbīs* in the market and brought them straight to you. 95. You call yourself a Brāhman and this action of yours is not good. Now make some penance or we shall excommunicate you. 96. The favour of Hari cannot be polluted by any touch (that is, it is sacred for ever); but how did you eat the food brought from the market?' While the revilers said this, listen to what the servant of Vishnu did. 97. He put his hand into his mouth and took out the *jīlbīs* and *radās* and handed them to the revilers at which they were astonished. 98. All the people thought it so wonderful that they said, 'It is a *ghatikā* since he ate the *radās* and *jīlbīs*, and this is nothing short of a miracle that he has done.' 99. Conversing thus between themselves they devotedly made him a bow and said,

‘The Husband of Rukmini is your helper and we persecuted you for nothing.’ 100. Sukhānanda was of a loving mind as also was his wife Surasurī; both husband and wife acted unitedly and served the saints. 101. One day he went on a pilgrimage to Mathurā, after he had told his wife to worship the saints when they came home. 102. He said, ‘If any Vaishnavs come to our house you serve them with your body, speech and mind and do not spare anything.’ 103. After thus instructing Surasurī he went away quickly; now let the listeners hear the event that took place in his absence. 104. A false *bairāgī* (or mendicant) came to Sukhānanda’s house, and the mistress bowed to him and lovingly worshipped him. 105. Seeing her beauty, lust arose in his mind and he said to Surasurī, ‘Let me enjoy you today.’ 106. The chaste woman replied, ‘Have your dinner now, and at night I will surely fulfil your wish.’ 107. Giving him this promise she gave him a dinner containing six juices, and the false *bairāgī* was pleased at heart with the thought of enjoying her that night. 108. After the sun had set and three hours of the night had passed, a beautiful bed was prepared in a secluded part of the house and she concentrated her mind. 109. At heart she thought of her husband’s feet and then she called the *bairāgī* in. A light was burning in the bedroom when the lustful man came, 110. and as he came near the door, he was pierced with the arrow of cupid (i. e., the god of passion). but as he looked at Surasurī she appeared to him like a fearful tigress. 111. A great fear arose in his mind and he said, ‘This is very strange, for when I intended to drink nectar, poison has fallen into my hands. 112. A man thinks he has before him a box containing fortune but as he puts out his hand with a desire to grasp it he sees before him only a burning fire; it is just like that. 113. A man may see a thing like a garland of

jewels and feel he should go and pick it up and put it round his neck, when suddenly he sees a large snake instead; it is just like that. 114. In the attempt to hold the chaste Draupadi in his fast embrace, Kichaka saw before him Bhimasen (the second brother of the Pāndavs); I see *this* event just like that.' 115. After saying these things he was panic-stricken at heart, for the tigress seemed to be roaring inside and looking at him with her eyes full of anger. 116. The lord of lust was thus put to shame and the man's passion for lust subsided, and all the five objects of sense were dissolved at once in his mind. 117. Then through fear he said, 'O mother, I am guilty. O courageous one, I persecuted you. But do not mind this guilt of mine.' 118. With this humble speech he prostrated himself before her, and then went a distance away and slept outside the house. In the meantime the sun arose, 119. and Surasuri became as before, performing the sprinkling of water in the yard and coating the house with cowdung. The false *bairāgī* bowed to her and said, 'Pardon me this fault.' 120. With great repentance at heart he stayed at the house, and conquered the six enemies of man as he spent his time in serving there. 121. In this way four months rolled on and when Sukhānanda returned home from his pilgrimage, the false *bairāgī* told him of the wrong he had committed. 122. The Vaishnav was a complete knower of the heart and he favoured him. Then he spent his time in lovingly singing the praises of God and thereby had a manifestation.

THE STORY OF THE BRAHMAN MĀDHAVDĀS

123. O pious people, listen with reverence to another delightful story about a Brāhman by the name of Mādhavdās, who was well versed in the study of the Vedas and the *Shāstras*. 124. He was a great Pundit; sensual desires never came upon him; he was always indifferent to

worldly things; and he did not like to talk of any earthly things. 125. In this way many days rolled on and his wife died; but he felt this a comfort, for he thought his earthly bond was now cut asunder. 126. Whatever belongings he had in the house such as money, grains, pots and ornaments, he distributed to the Brāhmans and felt satisfied at heart. 127. In this way he escaped the meshes of desire and started on a pilgrimage to Jagannāth, feeling as satisfied at heart as a parrot which escapes from a cage. 128. Arriving at the great sacred place he bathed in the sea, and hurriedly going into the temple of Vishnu he prostrated himself before Vishnu. 129. Seeing the *sagun* form of God he pleaded with a heart full of repentance and said, 'O Lord of gods, Lord of Vaikunth, Thou hast freed me from all earthly snares. 130. Aside from Thee I have no father or mother or brother, or son, or wife, or any other relative, or fortune; my mind is now centred in Thee.' 131. Then he bowed his head with love at the feet of Shri Hari aside from whose worship he did not care for any other means of salvation. 132. Although he was well versed in the study of the Vedas and the *Shāstras* he had not the least pride of learning, he was always loving, but indifferent to earthly things, having an extreme love for the *sagun* form of God. 133. A priest came there and said to Mādhavdās, 'Don't trouble the god here; get out at once; 134. for you bow to the god with empty hands.' Saying this he drove him out. 135. At this, Mādhavdās' heart became choked with emotion and he sat in loneliness, longing greatly in his heart to see the *sagun* form of Shripati (i. e., Vishnu). 136. Pleading in various ways he said, 'I am without service, devotion or money, and I do not know how to worship Thee. 137. Nor do I know how to worship Thee even mentally, oh *Adhokshaja* ! Oh Garudadhvaja (i. e., Vishnu), I know nothing of Thee; though outwardly

I call myself Thy (Vishnu's) servant.' 138. Pleading in this way, he ate neither fruit, root, nor food, but day and night he repeated the name of God, and in this way he had three fasts. 139. Giving up all desires of the body and of home he sang with love the praises of the Lord of the universe, and the Husband of Rukmini found himself in difficulty and thought of saving him. 140. Then the Lord of the universe said to Rukmini, ' Assume a *saguṇ* form and give food to Mādhavdās, for he has had three fasts.' 141. At this command the Mother of the universe prepared a dish with dainty foods and took it to him. 142. Mādhavdās was sleeping in a state of sub-consciousness and Rukmini awoke him lovingly and requested him to dine. 143. As he saw her beautiful form Mādhavdās was astonished at heart and said, ' O Mother, tell me who you are ' 144. Rukmini answered, ' I am the better half of Him whom you for ever contemplate and my name is Rukmini. 145. The Lord of Vaikunth has ordered me to give you a dinner. So do not hesitate but dine at once ; 146. and very shortly God Himself will give you a sight of Himself.' At this assurance he clasped the feet of the Mother. 147. Having regard to the words of the Mother, Mādhavdās dined and then he received leaves of *intsi* for cleaning his mouth, and Rukmini then disappeared. 148. The plate of gold and the drinking pot studded with jewels remained on the spot and Madhavdās at once washed them clean and kept them near his bed. 149. When it was dawn the priests began the waving of burning wicks over the image of God, and the Lord of Vaikunth was worshipped in all the proper forms by the priests. 150. But they missed the gold plates and the jewelled drinking pot and said, ' There has been a thief in the temple ; find him out at once.' 151. Making a search in the temple of Hari, they searched every individual in it, but no thief was to be found

and they did not know what to do. 152. Then they came to Mādhavdās and saw near him the drinking pot and said, 'At last the thief is found.' 153. Some said, 'He seems to be a rogue, his meditation is like that of a crane; he remained here for only four days, and has stolen these things.' 154. Without knowing the secret they called him many bad names, and shutting him up in a closed room they bound him hand and foot. 155. Then the Lord of the world appeared to the priests in a dream and told them, 'Mādhavdās is my loving *bhakta* and you have troubled him for nothing; 156. he came here and underwent three fasts; then I ordered Rukmini to give him food; 157. Rukmini forgot to bring back the drinking pot and plate and to return them to the temple; hence you have shut him up for nothing.' Such a manifestation they had. 158. Therefore the priests greatly repented and coming to Mādhavdās with true devotion, they bowed to him and said, 'We troubled you for nothing.' 159. Then they took him out and put him at the feet of the god and gave him the favour of Hari with their own hands. 160. After that all the inhabitants of the sacred place began to honour Mādhavdās and he was given a part of the food-offering for the god and did not undergo any more fasts.

WONDERS IN THE LIFE OF MĀDHAVDĀS

161. In this way some days rolled on, and then the Recliner on Shesha did another miracle, listen to it, ye pious ones. 162. The night-worship of the god (i. e., bathing him) had continued over midnight, and the priests asked Mādhavdās to come out. 163. Although the priests said so, still he was not in a conscious state of mind, for his mind was absorbed in the *sagun* form of God and he had lost all sense of bodily consciousness. 164. The priests remembered the former miracle, so all of them

came out, and with their own hands they put locks on the door. 165. Mādhavdās was already in the adjoining *mandap*, all absorbed in contemplation, and as he came to consciousness a little he caught cold. 166. Knowing this the Lord of the world came near to him and caressed him with His own hands and covered him with a blanket. 167. In the morning when the priests came to the temple they did not see the blanket on the bedstead at which they felt astonished. 168. Coming out they at once noticed on Mādhavdās the garment of a pleasant odour which they at once made out. 169. They said that although the god-room was locked at night, yet here was the blanket on the god; the merciful Shri Hari is indeed very subtle. 170. Seeing such a miracle all began to honour him, and the king came and prostrated himself with love before him. 171. Mādhavdās was sick of his growing reputation when he started for Mathurā to visit the Lord Shri Krishna. 172. Already he was free from desires and he was coursing his way through a certain town where there lived a Vaishnav *bhakta*. 173. He had heard of his reputation and therefore went to his house; but the master of the house had gone to another town, and so the mistress came out. 174. She bowed to him devotedly and said, 'I will give you dry provisions of food, so you do your own cooking and then dine; we are Kshatriyas by caste and we cannot serve you with our cooked food.' 175. Mādhavdās replied, 'You have given yourselves up to the thinking of Vishnu; you have made your race holy; you are fit to be revered by a class higher than yours, surely.' 176. Then the mistress of the house went to the market and bought some milk and sweetmeats and with true devotion offered him a dinner and satisfied him. 177. As he left the place he met the saint (master of the house) on his way back, and spoke to him in a sweet tone: 178. 'The mistress of the house

was there and showed us great hospitality; I ate sweetmeats there to my fill and now I have no desire.' 179. After this explanation they bowed to each other, and he (Mādhavdās) marched onward, bathing on the bank of the Yamunā and entering the town of Mathurā. 180. Then he went to the temple of the god and prostrated himself before the great door, but as he was in the act of entering the temple the priests opposed him. 181. The priests objected to his getting a vision and drove out the loving *bhakta* with blows. 182. Then the noble Vaishnav mentally offered a bow to the god and went to the Chiraghāt and concentrated his mind. 183. He brought the Lord Shri Krishna into his mind and lovingly began to praise Him, and some kindly person came there and gave him provisions of food to cook. 184. After the cooking was finished, he thought of God in his mind when Shri Hari came there; listen how. 185. The image with four arms was extremely beautiful to look at: the yellow robe shone with its lustre; in His ears were the shining divine earrings of a crocodile form and beautiful in shape. 186. The face of the god was very charming and attractive, and as one looked at it he forgot all bodily consciousness, and in this form *Shārang-dhar* (i. e., Vishnu) arrived there at that time. 187. Seeing the *sagun* form of God, Mādhavdās clasped His feet with his hands, and then the Soul of the world pressed him to His heart and began to talk with him: 188. 'You are my dear life, the priests do not know this secret; so they turned you out; then becoming cross, you came to this place: 189. in the temple I could not do without you; I very much struggled at heart, and in search of you I came to this place.' So said Vanamali (i. e., Vishnu). 190. The eyes of the god and his *bhakta* were full of tears, for when a mother tries to pacify her child, its love doubles. 191. Then the Lord of Vaikunth ate with him

dal, cakes and salt ; he was very fond of loving devotion, and therefore he ate to the full. 192. He who does not drink nectar even at the request of Indra, He with love eats coarse food in the company of His devoted *bhaktas*. 193. When the Life of the world was satisfied, Mādhavdās also felt satisfaction ; and then with love he gave Him a leaf of *tulsi* to cleanse His mouth. 194. Then Shri Krishnanāth went into the temple, and through a manifestation let the priests know that He had dined to his full satisfaction with Mādhavdās. 195. 'You expelled him out of the temple, so becoming cross he has gone and sat on the Chiraghāt; if you go and pacify his anger, then only will I eat the offered food.' 196. As *Chakrapāṇi* (i. e. Vishnu) said so, the priests were astonished at heart ; then they went and pacified Mādhavdās and brought him into the temple. 197. The god gave him a manifestation, and so he was respected by all ; for one who has for his friend the Husband of Rukminī, the whole universe favours him. 198. Then he said to himself, 'In Jagannāth my reputation was increasing, and so I came to Mathurā; but I cannot change what my fate has destined.' 199. For four months he stayed at Mathurā and from there he went to Gokul and Vrindavan, and from there the crest jewel of the *bhaktas* returned to Jagannāth. 200. He visited the god and the good people of that sacred place came to meet him ; at that time Mādhavdās was troubled with dysentery. 201. Not having the strength to go to the stool so many times, as the disease was at its height, he went and sat on the sea coast. 202. Then *Chakrapāṇi* (i. e., Vishnu) gave him water to wash himself, and as He found his cloth dirty He himself went and washed it. 203. As Mādhavdās noticed this he began to talk to the god : 'Oh Lord of the world, hast not Thou the strength to do away with my disease ?' 204. Hearing the speech of His *bhakta* the

Life of the world replied, 'One is obliged to endure bodily afflictions. 205. I shall not have the least trouble in removing your trouble, but then you will have to undergo rebirths and redeaths to suffer the physical affliction as destined. 206. You have been suffering from this trouble for many days, and now only four days are remaining, and after that you will be free from the disease.' As Shrirang (i. e., Vishnu) said this, 207. he (Mādhavdās) felt a great comfort, and after the lapse of some days a wonderful event took place, listen to it quietly, ye pious ones.

MĀDHAVDĀS TRIUMPHS OVER A PUNDIT AT JAGANNĀTH

208. At Jagannāth there arrived a great pundit (learned) who was very fond of debate. He said to Mādhavdās, 'You are well versed in the knowledge of philosophy (the Vedānt). 209. I wish to discuss it with you.' Mādhavdās consented, saying, 'I will go to the closet and come back presently.' 210. Then he took a pot and went and sat on the sea coast, thinking to himself, 'Why should I discuss with the Brāhman for nothing? 211. Pride is a mighty vice, and many have been thereby destroyed. If I beat the Brāhman in discussion I shall have to become a Brāhman ghost (in my future life).' 212. He pleaded, 'Oh God of gods, oh Shri Hari, how shall I get through this calamity?' So thinking, with a concerned heart he sat on the sea coast. 213. Then the God of gods, Shri Hari, assumed the form of Mādhavdās, and going to the pundit, he beat him in discussion. 214. He Who is the source of the four *Vedas* which came out from His breath, who can there be in all the worlds who could adequately oppose Him in discussion? 215. After that the Life of the world disappeared. In the meantime Mādhavdās who had gone out to clean himself returned 216. Then seeing him, the pundit bowed to him and the

Vaishnavs of the sacred place also said to him, ' You have beaten him in discussion. 217. Therefore we supplicate before you with good intention and without any sense of pride.' Then the pundit again addressing Mādhavdās said, ' Your knowledge is without opposition. 218. I have wandered all over the earth and have conquered all the learned men. But you stopped me by one word only.' 219. Mādhavdās understood in his mind that it was the doing of Shri Hari, and then the pundit requested Mādhavdās to favour him with his *mantra*. 220. With body, mind and speech he became the disciple of Mādhav, and following the way of *bhakti*, he had his body saved.

221. The next chapter also will be very delightful. It is the Lord of Pandhari who causes me to speak. Mahipati is his badge-bearer, and sings of the good qualities of the saints.

222. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shrī Bhakti-līlāmṛt*. By merely listening to it one's heart's desires are fulfilled. May the pious *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the forty-fourth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XLV

HARI VYĀSA, TRIPURADĀS, LĀLHĀN KHOJĪ,
LĀDU, TRILOKA, AND SAJAN

GOD AND HIS *BHAKTA* NOT DIFFERENT

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. You fortunate and good listeners, listen : God and his *bhakta* are not different ; they are connected one with the other ; take a simple illustration. 2. Just as coolness and the moon are one, and without difference, so the Lord of Vaikunth and his *bhakta* are without any difference ; 3. the sun and his charioteer Arun are two different names but the brightness of both is the same, and their two orbs are not seen separately. 4. If the lord of birds (i e., the eagle) is without wings how will he be able to fly ? In the same way God's fame is impossible without a *bhakta*. 5. If there were no strings how could a Brahm-*vīṇā* (a musical instrument) be played ? In the same way the two words, God and His *bhakta*, are without any difference.

6. In the last chapter the delightful story of the loving *bhakta* Mādhavdās was told. The Pervader of the world taking his form defeated a great and learned pundit in debate. 7. He gave up all sense of pride and came as a suppliant to Mādhavdās, and accepting his discipleship gave himself up to singing with love the praises of God. 8. God is proud of the Vaishnav *bhaktas* who are entirely free from all sense of enmity ; and God by His wonderful subtlety turned the pundit into a Vaishnav *bhakta*.

THE STORY OF HARI VYĀSA OF MATHURĀ

9. In Mathurā there lived a loving *bhakta* of God, by name Hari Vyāsa, who sang the praises of God and worshipped His *sagun* image. 10. He had kindness for all.

creatures, considering all people as his own self, and at the sight of him the heart even of a vile person melted. 11. After the lapse of some days Hari Vyāsa suddenly started on a pilgrimage, for he longed to see the idol at Jagannāth with his own eyes. 12. As he journeyed day by day he arrived at a very lovely garden with many trees and pure water. 13. He suggested to his disciples that as the place appeared so very lovely, they should perform morning ablutions there and then proceed on their journey. 14. When the disciples heard this suggestion they encamped there. It was the place of a goddess who was very responsive and many people came to visit her. 15. Just then a *shūdra* came there and slew a goat, and when Hari Vyāsa learned of it his heart sickened. 16. Said he, 'I had in my possession some bad deeds of my former birth, therefore is it that I have happened to come to this place at this time. The people here seem to be evil disposed, having no kindness at heart for other creatures, 17. for anyone who sees the committal of a bad action also shares in the sin of it.' Having said this, the Vaishnav *bhakta* left the place and continued his journey. 18. Before restarting they threw into the fire all their food provisions and had the cooking utensils purified by fire; they then threw away in that spot the flour they had kneaded and the pulse they had boiled. 19. Sad at heart the Vaishnav *bhaktas* walked on with empty bellies, and the goddess knew of this and she became full of fear. 20. She said, 'The great Vishnu has in his service slaves of limitless power like myself; Hari Vyāsa is His darling and he is going from here without eating. 21. Now I must go and pacify him, for only thus will my authority continue.' Thinking thus to herself, the Primal Mother started at once. 22. With a dejected heart Hari Vyāsa marched on singing the praises of Hari when suddenly the great Power (i. e.,

the goddess) met him and fell prostrate at his feet. 23. She pleaded, 'From my house you are going without eating, therefore the great Vishnu will be displeased with me and I entertain a great fear for Him. 24. You are a Vaishnav *bhakta* and you have direct manifestations of God; of this I am quite aware; therefore now come back at once.' In this way the goddess Bhavānī pleaded. 25. Then Hari Vyāsa replied, 'At your door a goat was sacrificed and if I eat food in that place, hell and its horror will be my only reward. 26. We are very strict Vaishnavs, so I can listen to your request only if you put a stop to the killing and then I will come and dine there; 27. otherwise, dejected at heart as we are, we can only go away from your abode.' Hearing this from the Vishnu-*bhakta*, Bhavānī (the goddess) agreed. 28. Then the Primal Power (the goddess) taking Hari Vyāsa by her hand brought him to her abode. Now the ruler of that country that night had a dream. 29. (The goddess ordered him in this dream), 'Proclaim all over the country that no one should practise killing at my door, for Hari Vyāsa is a true Vaishnav, and you yourself should supplicate him at once. 30. If you act otherwise, you will lose your kingdom.' When the king had this vision he was terror-stricken. 31. In the morning he related the dream to his minister, and going into the temple of the goddess, he prostrated himself before the Vaishnav. 32. Standing before Hari Vyāsa with his hands joined palm to palm he said, 'I supplicate the *Śvāmī* with the most complete devotion; please accept me as your disciple and favour me,' and with these words he grasped his feet. 33. The *sādguru* then said to him, 'From today you yourself must not practise killing and you must proclaim an order all over your kingdom that no animal be killed as a victim.' 34. The Prince replied, 'By all means.' Then he sent an

order throughout his country to that effect, and taking the *mantra* of the *Swāmī* (i. e., Hari Vyāsa), he himself became a complete Vaishnav. 35. Hari Vyāsa stayed there for six months and drew to himself there a large number of disciples all of whom were *bhaktas* of Vishnu. 36. On the eleventh of the fortnight there was the Hari-watch-night when the praises of Hari were heartily sung and all repeated with love the names of God. 37. Many pilgrims came to visit the goddess from a long distance, but there was no more killing of beasts, for at night Bhavānī (the goddess) gave them a vision in their dreams. 38. All the unkind and evil-minded became loving *bhaktas* of God; and as for the saint (Hari Vyāsa), he was full of kindness and compassion and he saved the whole world. 39. People who were formerly worshippers of the goddess, afterwards became worshippers of Vishnu, and Hari Vyāsa founded a *Math* (monastery) there and left one of his disciples to manage it. 40. Saving the world in this way he at once went to Jagannāth. The earthly ocean is very wide and deep but the saints get across it.

THE STORY OF TRIPURADĀS, THE ROYAL MINISTER

41. Listen, with reverence, oh pious people, to another interesting story about a king's minister named Tripuradās. 42. By the favour of his *sadguru*, indifference to worldly things was aroused in him, for he had all his fortune plundered and thus became free from all earthly desires. 43. His wife too was of a very good character, being intent upon thinking of Vishnu, and both the husband and wife went to stay at Vrindāvan. 44. They attended the worship of Shri Hari three times daily, for the Lord of Vaikunth is eager for devotion and He gives manifestations in various ways. 45. There the king came and distributed abundance of money to the people, and worshipped the Vaishnavs and noble

Brāhmans who came there in the course of things. 46. After spending his money there in this way he soon returned to his country ; but he did not perform the great ceremony of the worship of God, for he had forgotten God. 47. As Tripuradās knew of it he felt sad and said, 'The king is ignorant, for he has not worshipped the Husband of Indirā (i. e., Vishnu). 48. He acts, I think, as if he were watering the branches instead of the roots of the tree ; 49. he has forgotten that it is only when a mother feeds herself properly that her infant child will obtain as much milk as it needs, for if the mother is kept without food the child cannot be properly fed.' 50. Then Tripuradās addressed his wife : ' I wish to offer garments to Shri Hari (Vishnu).' 51. The wife said in reply, ' There is no money in the house ; and if you are offered anything without asking, you refuse it. 52. Such being the case, O lord of my life, how can we buy garments ? In fact the God of gods, the Lord of Vaikunth, lacks nothing. 53. On the god there are very many fine clothes of gold ; then why do you concern yourself for nothing ?' 54. Tripuradās replied, ' Quite true, but I have that longing.' He had an ink-pot in his house which he sold in the market 55. for sixteen annas, and with the money he bought some rough cloth to offer it to Shri Hari (i. e., Vishnu). 56. Then he requested the *pūjārī* (i. e., worshipper of the god), ' Here I have bought a garment for the god. Offer it please and then put it on Keshav (i. e., Vishnu), and thus fulfil my desire, humble as I am.' 57. As the priests heard his words they said in reply, ' This garment is not becoming to the god. Are you not ashamed to bring one like that ? 58. How will a patch of a dirty rag be suitable on rich cloth ? For our god lacks nothing.' Thus did they speak to him. 59. But Tripuradās again pleaded, ' Please request the god for me that as this cloth is offered by a lowly person, he will

accept it.' 60. Saying these words he pushed the cloth into the temple. Now the priest there was a great rogue who at once threw the cloth on the ground. 61. But at night when the god's worship was finished the people there witnessed a miracle. The image of the Husband of Indirā (i. e., Vishnu) had a shivering cold and was trembling; 62. on seeing such a strange sight, the Vaishnav *bhaktas* assembled there. They put many garments on the god, and live coals were kindled in a pan and placed before the god. 63. But the image continued trembling, and the people said, 'What should be done now?' There was a steward who was sleeping on the rough cloth offered by Tripuradās and the steward had a vision in which he heard the god to say, 64. 'Tripuradās with loving devotion has offered to me a rough new piece of cloth; put it on me at once, and then the shivering will stop.' 65. When *Chakrapāni* (i. e., Vishnu) gave this vision all felt wonder-struck. Then they put the rough cloth on the god and at once witnessed the miracle. 66. The god who was dark as a cloud and had been trembling with cold at once became quiet; for the Merciful to the lowly enhances the reputation of His *bhaktas* by force if necessary. 67. All the Vaishnavs began to wonder and said, 'The Lord of Vaikunth is always eagerly desirous of devotion.' Then they went and communicated the event to Tripuradās and made a low bow to him. 68. As the noble Vaishnav heard it his heart melted, his throat choked with emotion, his eyes filled with tears of joy and he exclaimed, 'God is the Saviour of the lowly and the *Guru* of the world. 69. That brother of the helpless, the cloud of mercy, Shri Krishna, as he ate with love from the vegetable leaf served by Draupadī, all the three worlds were filled with satisfaction.' 70. In this manner Tripuradās praised Shri Hari with his lips. His devotion was greatly deepened and he had great love for God at heart.

THE STORY OF LĀLHĀN KHOJĪ

71. There is another beautiful story which if listened to with reverence will cause all bad actions to disappear, and indifference to worldly things will be impressed on the heart. 72. There lived an expert *bhakta* of God named Lālhān Khojī who was ever at the service of his *sadguru* and with reverence welcomed saints, *sādhus* and noble Vaishnavs, 73. his mind ever full of repentance and of devotion to the remembrance of Shri Hari. His *guru* was a simple *bhakta* of God and he once said to the people, 74. 'When I die, a bell will ring in the sky and then you will all understand what loving devotion to God really means.' 75. But although he said this very definitely, yet none of his followers accepted it, for they were affected by scruples and did not think of what was good for themselves. 76. Lālhān Khojī then went to another town, and as he did not return for some days the *sadguru* felt concerned at heart. 77. Said he, 'My good disciple is not by me, and my last moment is nigh.' Having said this he breathed his last. 78. The people of the town then assembled and performed the funeral rites, and three days later Lālhān Khojī returned. 79. When Khojī heard that his *sadguru* had gone to his final abode he felt very sad at heart and said, 'I lost the opportunity of serving my *sadguru* in his last moment. 80. I had not the good fortune to make my hands serviceable to my *Swāmī* at the end.' Then he quieted himself thoughtfully. 81. But there were some crooked men in the town who insulted the memory of the *sadguru* by saying, 'We did not hear the ringing of the bell which he had foretold so clearly.' 82. Khojī answered, 'Last night the *sadguru* spoke to me in a vision that he was going to the city of Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu's heaven); 83. and the *Swāmī* told me that the ringing of the bell was reserved for me, and after saying this he went to the land of

Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu's heaven).’ 84. But although Khoji said this, none would trust him. Lālhān Khoji then took a bath, and later sat down in contemplation. 85. Bringing the image of his *sadguru* into his mind he shut both his eyelids, and all the people heard the ringing of the bell in the sky. 86. From his lips came the sound of ‘ Rāma, Rāma ’ and at once Khoji died. As the people witnessed it, they said, ‘ Blessed is he ; blessed is he ; 87. for he verified the promise of his *sadguru* and made his own body a success ; while uttering “ Rāma, Rāma ” he himself started for Vaikunth. ’

THE STORY OF LĀDU OF JOTAPUR

88. There was a Vaishnav *bhakta* named Lādu, an inhabitant of Jotapur who looked on the whole world as himself and was for ever indifferent to worldly things. 89. He did not differentiate between what was his own and that of another ; he had the same feeling towards all beings ; to him the prince and the pauper were alike. 90. In his mind there was always freedom from desire ; singing the praises of God with love, he always sat in loneliness and contemplated the image of Shri Vishnu. 91. When indifference to worldly things was aroused in him he went by himself to visit the sacred places, and lovingly he saw the universal creation of Shri Hari. 92. He also visited with love the saints who lived at the sacred places, as well as the sacred shrines well-known in the *Purāns*. 93. After visiting these places he went to the country of Kāura, where the people were very cruel, for they worshipped the goddess *Shakti*. 94. Making offerings of liquor and flesh to the *Devi* (the goddess), the people there were very arrogant and were blinded with sensual objects ; they even offered human victims. 95. Lādu, the loving *bhakta* of Vishnu, by chance arrived there just as they were in search of a human victim and they found this Vaishnav *bhakta*. 96. Four of them taking

hold of him, they carried him into the temple of Ambikā (i. e., the goddess). Lādu, giving up all love for his body, thought at heart of Vanamālī (i. e., Vishnu). 97. The Life of the world alone is the Soul of the universe, and aside from Him there is neither killer nor saviour. So Lādu brought the image of Shri Vishnu into his mind and was firm in his faith. 98. After he had been taken into the temple, three of the men held him fast, while the fourth unsheathed his sword; and just then a very wonderful event took place. 99. The goddess assumed a hideous form and killed the four men, and then fell prostrate at the feet of the Vaishnav *bhakta* saying, ' Please pardon all my faults. ' 100. Pleading in this way, Bhagavatī (the goddess) assumed a small form; this *sgun* image of the goddess had eight arms and she played with the torch in her hand before him. 101. Then being pleased, the Primal Mother said to the Vaishnav *bhakta*, ' Ask for whatever boon you wish without any reserve. ' 102. The Vaishnav *bhakta* replied, ' You always ask for human victims but the boon I ask is that you give this up from today, so that there may be no more killing here; 103. then all the people of your country should follow the Vaishnav sect. ' As he thus spoke, the goddess replied, ' Surely. ' 104. Entering into the dream of the king of that country at night the goddess told him, ' Fortunately a Vaishnav has come here; go and make supplication to him. 105. From today there has to be no more killing at my door or I shall be angry with you, and you will have to undergo many sufferings in your earthly life. ' 106. The king was astonished at this vision, and he went into the temple of Ambikā (the goddess) and made a low bow to the *bhakta* of Vishnu. 107. The Vaishnav Lādu was a loving *bhakta* and the men who had been trying to kill him were lying dead there in the temple, at which the king felt more astonished. 108. Then with a repentant heart he became

the disciple of the saint; and the whole country became the followers of Saint Lādu. 109. The people then contemplated Vishnu and performed the song-services of Hari, observing a fast on the eleventh day of every fortnight and showing compassion to all beings and serving the saints. 110. For the noble Vaishnavs had descended as *avatārs* on earth to save the world.

THE STORY OF TRILOKA THE GOLDSMITH

There is another story of a saint; listen to it with reverence, you pious ones. 111. There was once a goldsmith named Triloka, a great pious *bhakta*, who served the saints with true devotion and was indifferent to all worldly affairs. 112. He made ornaments but took money from his customers only for his labour, and he did not steal any silver or gold. 113. Once upon a time there was a wedding at the king's palace and the king sent for Triloka and commanded him, 114. 'Prepare for me a couple of Jehagir ornaments studded with jewels; do it as quickly as you can, for a more skilful goldsmith is not to be found all over the town.' 115. With the order the king gave him gold and rubies, and Triloka took them and returned home. 116. As he entered his house he saw a gathering of Vaishnavs, so he felt glad at heart and said, 'My life seems to be prosperous.' 117. Then he had the cooking nicely made worshipped the saints and had plates served with food, and gave all of them a dinner. 118. As the Vaishnavs stayed at his house for two days, he quite forgot to prepare the pair of the Jehagir ornaments. 119. On the third day the king sent for him saying, 'Give me the ornaments quickly.' At this he was panic-stricken and, 120. joining his hands palm to palm, he said, 'Tomorrow I will bring them.' The king replied, 'If you fail to do so, you will most certainly be punished.' 121. Then the noble

Vaishnav returned home with concern in his heart and said, 'It is a difficult task and will require four days. 122. I have promised the king to give it tomorrow; it seems death has approached me, and I shall also miss the service of the saints.' 123. Thus thinking he ran away into a forest where he concentrated his mind and meditated on the Husband of Rukmini. 124. In this way the night passed and the sun arose. Now the Lord of Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu) saw Triloka's difficulty and performed for him a miracle. 125. Assuming the form of Triloka he sat preparing the ornament at his shop, so that the Jehagīr ornaments were ready when the king sent for them. 126. He (i. e., Vishnu) went to the palace and saluted the king, and as he showed the ornament to the king, the latter said, 'Your skill is without limit.' 127. For the ornaments had a setting of jewels and their lustre dazzled the eyes, so the king was very pleased and gave him a large sum of money. 128. Shri Hari (i. e., Vishnu) took the money in his *padar* (i. e., the end of the cloth he wore) and returning to the house of his *bhakta* he handed it to the mistress of the house and told her, 129. 'Today there is to be a festival to which *sādhus* and saints will come, so prepare the dainty food.' She accepted the command with a bowed head, 130. and when the cooking was complete the Vaishnav *bhaktas* came to the house, and the Soul of the world in the form of Triloka worshipped them. 131. When the saints had been satisfied, He too dined there. Then having tied some favour in the end of his *padar*, He at once set off to go to the forest. 132. In the form of a *sādhu* he met and addressed Triloka, 'I have missed the path, please show it to me.' 133. As the noble Vaishnav Triloka saw a *barāṇī* before him he bowed to him and said, 'O *svāmī*, you have missed your way completely and have come into a wilderness.' As the expert *bhakta* thus spoke, *Shūrangdhar* (i. e., Vishnu) replied,

134. 'There lives in this town Triloka the goldsmith; I dined at his house sumptuously, 135. for he had invited Vaishnavs to his house and held a festival there; many daintily cooked dishes were served, the eating of which has brought on sloth; 136. every moment I feel sleepy and this has made me miss my way; but I have brought this favour for you; so eat it at once.' 137. Thus did he act his part, making Triloka eat the favour, and covering him with his mercy, for compassion for the lowly arose in His mind. 138. As he ate the great favour, Triloka asked the *sādhū*, 'How did you perform a festival, and where did you get the money from to spend on it?' 139. On this the Husband of Rukmini replied that He had prepared a pair of Jehagīr ornaments studded with gems and that when he took them to the king the latter was very pleased; 140. as the king had given him a good sum of money, he had arranged a great festival. As he heard the *sādhū* say this, he (Triloka) felt much astonished. 141. Then the Vaishnav *bhaktā* took him along with him and came timidly to his house. While he was inquiring of his wife all about the festival the *bairāgī* disappeared. 142. The wife then said, 'Why do you sham madness? You had prepared the pair of Jehagīr ornaments for which the king gave you the big sum of money. 143. Then you sent for the Vaishnavs and arranged the festival.' Triloka at once understood in his heart that it was Shri Hari who had been put to all this trouble for him. 144. So he said, 'The beautiful father of Brahma-deva, the Dweller in Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu), the Saviour of the world himself, became the goldsmith and pleased the king, so I think.' 145. But if the thing had become known his reputation would have grown, therefore with an astonished heart he observed complete silence. 146. By the favour of Shri Hari all the *Siddhīs* (the accomplishments personified) became favourable to him,

and with great delight in his heart he served the saints with true devotion.

THE STORY OF SAJANA THE MUSLIM BUTCHER

147. There was a Vaishnav *bhakta*, a (Muslim) butcher named Sajana, entirely indifferent to worldly affairs, and while he did his business he sang the praises of Shri Hari. 148. From his caste people he bought flesh and sold it by retail and in this way passed his life. 149. But he did not do the killing himself, nor did he ever tell an untruth, and if he saw a Vaishnav *bhakta* he bowed to him, 150. and giving him provisions of food, he thus satisfied every unexpected guest. He was full of kindness to all creatures and was pure both internally and externally. 151. His clothes and vessels were all pure, the *tulsī* altar was very clean, he bathed regularly and he thought of the Lord of Vaikunth. 152. His wife too was very faithful to her husband, being favourable to him as regards gaining the spiritual riches; and knowing the heart of her husband she worshipped the *sādhus* and the saints. 153. In order to weigh the meat, he had the *Shābgrām* (emblem of Vishnu) for a weight, and the Lord of the world seeing his devotion was greatly pleased. 154. One day the Vaishnav *bhakta* was sitting in his shop in the market when a Brāhman came along and recognized the stone of weight as the *Shābgrām*. 155. So he said to Sajana in a pleading tone, 'Sir, this is an image of Vishnu; you must not keep it in your house, but give it to me at once. 156. If you ask for any money for it I will give you the money forthwith.' As the noble Brāhman thus pleaded, Sajana gave him the *Shābgrām* (i. e., the emblem of Vishnu), 157. and the Brāhman took it home and started a festival; inviting Brāhmans well-versed in the *Vedas*, he thus began the worship of Vishnu. 158. Sprinkling the god splendidly

with water he performed worship in all the sixteen recognized ways, but *Adhokshaja* (i. e., Vishnu) did not like it and said, ' I miss the purpose of my *bhakta*. ' 159. For the Brāhman was worshipping the *Shāligrām* (Vishnu's emblem) and fed the Brāhmans. At night the Life of the world came to him in a dream and said, 160. ' I, Narahari (i. e., Vishnu), was quite pleased at the house of Sajana, the butcher. Why did you bring me here ? I do not feel happy here ; 161. as soon as it is morning, please take me back ; if you do not do this, your life will be in peril.' 162. The Brāhman became frightened and at once got up. Now the butcher would not accept any food or water in the absence of the *Shāligrām*. 163. For one whole day and night Sajana had to fast, and when day came he saw the Brāhman at his door. 164. The Brāhman related to him his dream and said, ' You also are a great Vaishnav *bhakta* and you may go on worshipping this your god with loving devotion.' 165. As Sajana the butcher heard the words of the Brāhman he was very pleased at heart, and after he had worshipped the image of Vishnu he took food and water. 166. Hari is eagerly desirous of loving devotion ; he does not think of caste or race ; he performs low things in person setting aside His own glory. 167. Seeing the devotion of the (Muslim) butcher, the image of Shri Vishnu was pleased. Then Sajana wished to go to Jagannāth, 168. and the noble Vaishnav started with a multitude of pilgrims, taking the *Shāligrām* with him and worshipping it with reverence. 169. Every day he took a bath, made the twelve marks of the *gopichandan* clay (i. e., the Vaishnav's mark) and he wore round his neck the *tulsi* garland which shone like a real Vaishnav.

FALSE CHARGE BY AN ADULTERESS AGAINST THE MUSLIM VAISHNAV

170. In this way he performed his daily religious rites and worshipped the image of *Shāligrām*, begging his food

and thus maintaining himself on the way. 171. At night he used to rest away from the other pilgrims, and as he was journeying on daily, he entered a town on his route. 172. To beg his food he entered a house in the town where the mistress of the house was an adulteress, and at the sight of him passion overpowered her. 173. With the wish of lustful enjoyment she made him stay in her house, giving him food and treating him with great respect. 174. But the Vaishnav *bhakta* did not know her evil intention, for he was deceived by her external hospitality when he halted there. 175. At midnight the mistress of the house went near him and began to talk in sweet tones to Sajana and said, 'I will accompany you.' 176. As the adulteress thus spoke he replied, 'Your husband is asleep in the house; don't desert him.' 177. As the noble Vaishnav thus replied, the beautiful woman went into the house and cut the throat of her husband and immediately brought out his head. 178. Then she said to Sajana, 'I have killed my husband with my own hands; now give me the pleasure of enjoying you;' but the Vaishnav *bhakta* would not listen to her. 179. The adulteress said to him, 'For your sake I killed my husband, and if you do not consent to my request I shall publicly shame you.' 180. Saying this the woman went out at once and shouted loudly in the market at which the people assembled. 181. She told them, 'This robber here broke into my house and killed my husband. 182. On account of his garlands and the clay marks, the evil man looks like a Vaishnav, and therefore he was given quarters in the house. I surely did not know that he was a murderer.' 183. As the adulteress said this the people felt deeply stirred and took the Vaishnav *bhakta* before the court of law. 184. The Town Officer asked the Vaishnav, 'You have acted in a very strange and foolish way; while you ate food at that house you were bent on

murder.' 185. Then Sajana related everything that had happened from beginning to end, but no one would believe him, for the circumstantial evidence was against him. 186. Some said, 'The rogue has around his neck a number of garlands of *tulsī* and yet he killed the master of the house; how can he be called good?' 187. Others said, 'Whatever he says must be correct; why do you insult him for nothing? The woman is by nature an adulteress and she herself killed her husband; 188. so we firmly believe; don't listen to her stories; let the pilgrim go; that will be the right thing to do.' 189. Hearing this plea of the righteous people the officer of the town accepted it and then discharged the butcher Sajana. But listen to what the adulteress then said: 190. 'This man has murdered my husband, therefore cut off his hand; if you do not give heed to what I say I will report the matter to the king.'

SAJANA'S HAND CUT OFF

191. Seeing her resolve, the official had the hand of Sajana cut off by her, which made the noble Vaishnav very sad and he said, 'I cannot surmount the evil action done in my former birth.' 192. By this time the crowd of pilgrims had gone a long way ahead, but he quickly overtook them, and then the people asked him, 'Where did you commit a theft? 193. We see your hand has been cut off.' Such was their imagination, but the butcher Sajana continued with joy his singing of the praises of Shri Hari. 194. While he was in this condition he continued his journey day by day and when Jagannāth was only a small distance away a wonderful event took place. 195. The god gave a vision to the priests saying: 'Take a palanquin and go and seat in it the butcher Sajana who is my *bhakta*.' 196. When they saw the vision the priests wondered very much, but taking a palanquin they joined

the crowd of pilgrims. 197. Then they asked the people, 'Show us the Vaishnav *bhakta*, Sajana the butcher. 198. Jagannāth has ordered us to seat him in the palanquin and take him to His temple.' As the priests asked this the pilgrims pointed them to Sajana. 199. Said the priests, 'O Vaishnav *bhakta*, Jagannāth loves you very much, therefore sit in the palanquin and honour our request.' 200. As the priests thus requested him the pilgrims were wonderstruck and said, 'On the way he committed a theft, and got his hand cut off. 201. Now we understand the epithet of Shri Hari, "the Purifier of the sinful," for He has sent a palanquin to carry a robber.' 202. The wise ones replied, 'One only knows his own heart; why do you insult him for nothing and give up repeating the names of God? 203. It is because He sees his pure devotion that God sent him a palanquin: when you see such evidence, why do you needlessly insult him?' 204. Well, people have different natures, so they gossiped in various ways; some censured, some praised him, but when they discerned the evidence from experience, they knew how to respect a saint. 205. Then the priests said, 'O Vaishnav *bhakta*, please sit in the palanquin: Jagannāth is uneasy on your account; and we have come to take you there.' 206. Hearing them say this the loving *bhakta* replied, 'I will never sit in the palanquin, for without any offence of mine, Jagannāth had my hand cut off; 207. it is just like cutting the nose first and then wiping the blood with a costly silk garment; that is how I take this attempt of the god to pacify me.'

SAJANA'S PRAYER

208. After he had said this, tears fell from his eyes and he prayed, 'O Brother of the helpless, and dark as a cloud, why art Thou angry with me? 209. That Thou dost help Thy *bhaktas* in their distress is well-known to the *Purāns*;

but from my own personal experience I consider it untrue. 210. If Thou didst act in this way, why didst Thou fasten to Thy feet the badge of excellence? I followed Thy feet in my mind, speech and body.' 211. In this way Sajana the butcher lamented at length, when Shri Hari in *sagun* form met him. 212. With four arms the image was very beautiful to look at, in His ears there shone the divine earrings, in His hand He held the shell and the disc, and the lustre of his silk robe was dazzling. 213. Without becoming visible to the people the Lord of the world met the butcher who clasped his feet and embraced him. 214. Then the loving *bhakta* asked Shri Hari, 'Why didst Thou have my hand cut off? What was the evil action I did in my former birth? O God, tell me at once.' 215. The Life of the world replied, 'In your former birth you were a Brāhman, and on the bank of the Gangā river you bathed and were worshipping Vishnu. 216. A cow had escaped the hands of a butcher and had run away when the butcher came and inquired of you. 217. You did not speak to him at all, but you made a sign guiding him with your hand, and the butcher then caught the cow and butchered her. 218. Debt, enmity, and murder cannot be got rid of without some return, and the cow took another birth in order to take her retribution from the butcher. 219. The butcher and the cow became husband and wife, and as there existed a deadly hatred between the two, the wife troubled him constantly. 220. Because you had in your store of merit this bad action in your former birth, you went to her house, and when she came to you at night she tried to entangle you in her lust. 221. The life of the husband was at an end, so she took the opportunity to take her retribution for your enmity in your former birth; though she cut the throat of her husband with her own hand, she fastened the charge on you; 222. and the hand with which you had

pointed out the cow, she had that hand cut off. Such is the way of *karma*.' Thus did Shripati explain to Sajana, 223. adding, 'As you were mentally worshipping Vishnu, you suddenly saw the butcher, therefore you had a birth in that caste. 224. The Brāhman way of living you liked very much, even though a Muslim; but there is no distinction at all in devotion and worship (whatever the source), and thereby I, the Recliner on Shesha, was delighted.'

SAJANA'S HAND RESTORED

225. Then Jagannāth became pleased and he performed a very wonderful event, for his (Sajana's) hand at once sprouted, and all the people saw it. 226. The crowds of *bhaktas* were delighted and they clapped their hands with shouts of victory; and said Vanamālī (i. e., Vishnu) was pleased with His *bhakta*; this is indeed a marvel without comparison. 227. Seeing this wonderful event all the people made him a prostrate *namaskār* and said, 'Blessed is this noble Vaishnav. He has made the Sporter in Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu) subservient to him. 228. Shripati in this way shows to the people the wonderful actions of his *bhaktas* and thus increases their reputation. Sajana the butcher was pleased at heart and then proceeded to Jagannāth. 229. He bathed in the sea, then went to visit Shri Hari (i. e., the god Jagannāth). He stayed there for four months and visited the god three times a day. 230. He was for ever engaged in the contemplation of Vishnu and in singing the praises of Hari, his mind was always joyful. Then taking leave of Jagannāth, he returned to his place. 231. Shri Hari (i. e., Vishnu) has many *bhaktas*, and their lives are set forth by the Lord of Vaikunth in many ways in order to save those who have devotion. 232. Different saints have different ways of living, but their devotion is one

of love and has one object, seeing which the Husband of Rukmini is delighted and increases their fame in the world. 233. In the next chapter there is a very beautiful story of which the Husband of Rukmini is the relater. He has given the blessing of assurance to Mahipati and out of mercy has made his heart His abode. 234. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktatīlāmrit*. By merely listening to it one's heart's desires are fulfilled. May the pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the forty-fifth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XLVI

NARAVĀHANA, RĀYASING AND ANGADA,
QUEEN GUNAVANTĪ, KUVARĀBĀĪ,
GIRIDHARLĀL, AND NĀRĀYAN SWĀMĪ

THE LIVES OF SAINTS ARE PURIFYING

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. The lives of the saints are the cream of all auspicious things, being like the store of the great accomplishments or the home of *Sāyujya mukti* (i. e., absorption into the essence of Brahm; or final salvation). 2. Theirs is the state of fulness and their devotion surpasses even the fourth and highest form of salvation. They are the inner light of love and are full of courage and righteousness. 3. They are the very essence of nectar, the great brilliancy of the sun, or the extensive space of the sky, and the entire moveable and immoveable creation. 4. They are the resting place of the Vaishnav *māyā* or the source of the Bhāgīrathī, the path to *Vaikunth* or the *saṅga* form of Shri Hari. 5. The stories of saints are like a shower of clouds after suffering long from absence of rain; they are, as it were, the family life of the righteous.

6. In the last chapter there was the wonderful story of the loving *bhakta* Sajana, the [Muslim] butcher, and how when Jagannāth was pleased with him, his arm at once sprouted.

THE STORY OF NARAVĀHANA, A *BHAKTA* OF VISHNU

7. There was a *bhakta* of Vishnu who was ever in the service of the saints and was always in the habit of repeating the names Rādhā Krishna. 8. Over the river *Mahānadi* he rowed people in a ferry boat; and in this way, being always indifferent to worldly things at heart,

he earned his livelihood. 9. He accepted no money from *sādhus*, saints and noble Vaishnavs, nor did he take money from the poor and the helpless when carrying them across. 10. The rich merchants paid what they liked and he was content with it; for he possessed a righteous conscientiousness. 11. Once upon a time some evil-minded men carried a complaint to the king about him. 12. They said, 'The man whom you have appointed for the ferry boat on the bank of the river to carry men across, does not pay any money as tax to the royal treasury but keeps all his earnings in his house.' 13. When the king heard these bad men he flew into a rage and exclaimed, 'If the boatman is so arrogant, then his house must be plundered.' 14. When the order went forth from the king's lips the royal messengers went to his house but found no money; therefore they began to raze the house to the ground. 15. Even then they did not see any money or jewellery, so they bound Naravāhana hand and foot and carried him to the king. 16. The evil-minded then told the king, 'He has placed his possessions somewhere else,' and at this the king put him in prison, 17. saying, 'Tell us at once where you have secreted your property, or else we shall take your life.' 18. That day the *bhakta* of Vishnu went without food until evening, when a maid of his went to the jail with food for him. 19. He said to the maid, 'I am in jail, and I see no way of escape; 20. every day I spent all the money in the service of saints, so I have nothing in my house; therefore what can I show to the king?' 21. The maid replied, 'Why do you feel concerned? When you are in difficulty remember Shri Hari in your heart. 22. One should cling to the donor of dainty foods when he is starving in the time of famine; or one should cling to the swimmer when on the point of being drowned in a great flood; in the same way one should plea with Anant (i. e., Vishnu) in time of

adversity. 23. So when one is afflicted by disease, he should repeat the life-giving *mantra*; in the same way when a *bhakta* of God is in difficulty he should sit and contemplate Shri Hari. ' 24. This advice of his maid, Naravāhana liked very much, so he took the rosary of *tulsi* beads in his hand and began to sing the praises of God to himself. 25. He worshipped the images of Rādhā and Krishna and their *sagun* forms he brought into his contemplation, with a concentrated mind repeating the names of God day and night. 26. Closing his eyes he thought of the Lord of Vaikunth, of His four arms and beautiful appearance, and of His hands adorned with the shell and disc. 27. Bringing this form into his contemplation he began to plead, ' O God of gods, the Giver of salvation, free me from the delusion of this earthly life. 28. O Lord of the world, Thou hast saved many *bhaktas* in their difficulty; now look on me with an eye of mercy, and sever the meshes of worldly things. ' 29. Hearing this plea, *Chakrapāni* (i. e., Vishnu) was at once pleased and on the third day his fetters were cut off, for God said to the king in his dream, 30. ' Naravāhana is my dear *bhakta* who is lovingly given to the service of the *sādhus* for ever; you have persecuted him for nothing, and that will destroy your good deeds. 31. You are arrogant as a king, for you do not think of your royal duty. You listened to the advice of the wicked and have persecuted the *bhakta* of Vishnu. 32. Now open your eyes and go and make a prostrate bow to Naravāhana. ' Seeing this vision, the king got up from his sleep, 33. and very much frightened at heart he went to the prison and calling to Naravāhana with love he said to him humbly, 34. ' Please do not think of my fault, but go home; I listened to the advice of the evil-minded and persecuted you. ' 35. As Naravāhana heard the humble words of the king he was pleased at heart and

exclaimed, 'It is the doing of the Lord of the lowly, *Chakrapāṇi* (i.e., Vishnu).' 36. As he went to his house the members of his family were delighted and with love he continued the service of the saints, the *Siddhīs* (the accomplishments personified) serving at his house like slaves

THE STORY OF THE PRINCES RĀYASING
AND ANGADA

37. There is a very delightful story to which may the fortunate listeners listen with reverence, about two brothers, the princes Rāyasing and Angada. 38. The wife of the younger brother Angada was very devoted and faithful, and she had a great love for the worship of Vishnu and the stories of Shri Hari. 39. Becoming the disciple of a man who was a great *bhakta* of Vishnu, she always repeated the names of God and her mind was full of love. 40. One day her *sadguru* by chance came into the capital and the wife of Angada, felt greatly rejoiced and brought him to the palace. 41. With all the provisions of worship she started the worship of her *sadguru* and when her husband Angada learned of it, he angrily prevented her from doing it. 42. Said he, 'A *guru* is simply a nonsense; for the husband alone is the wife's god; show me if there is any better deity than he.' 43. Saying this he arrogantly prevented her worship of her *sadguru*, so she gave up food for three days. 44. For the sake of her devotion Shri Hari came to Angada in a dream with His four arms and beautiful appearance and with hands adorned with shell and disc. 45. The face of the god was beautiful and attractive, and he wore around His waist the divine yellow silk robe, and on his feet were the small bells and ornaments and in His ears were the crocodile earrings. 46. Angada vividly saw in his dream this glorious image and with devotion he placed his head at His feet, and his mind became

quieted with love. 47. When in the morning he awoke he pacified his wife saying, 'Through your favour the Lord of Vaikunth has met me.' 48. Then bringing her *sādguru* to the palace he worshipped him in all the ways of worship, and with true devotion at heart took his initiatory *mantra*. 49. Both the husband and wife gave themselves up to the service of Shri Vishnu, serving devotedly the *sādhus* and spending their money in a good cause.

50. Then the elder brother Rāyasing sent Angada to a foreign country where he took an army with him and plundered a king. 51. There he found a hundred diamonds and distributed them to the Vaishnavs except one which he reserved as an offering to Jagannāth. 52. When the Vaishnav returned to the capital he gave all the wealth of plunder to his brother; but the servants told the king that he had secreted one valuable diamond. 53. And even when Rāyasing demanded it, Angada would not part with it, so his mind became sullied by a scruple and he flew into a rage. 54. Then he told his sister to poison Angada, and agreeing to this plan she invited him to dine. 55. Angada did not know that she had any evil intention in her mind, and his sister mixed poison in the food and served him with it. 56. Bringing the Lord of Vaikunth in his mind, Angada with love offered the food to God, and Shripati seeing his firm devotion performed a miracle. 57. He sat in the heart of Angada and said, 'Don't eat the food at all, for it is cooked with poison at the instruction of your brother.' 58. But the *bhakta* of Vishnu said, 'I have offered the food to the god, therefore I cannot abandon this divine favour, I must positively eat it with great love.' 59. Then saying, 'Shri Hari is the eater,' Angada ate the whole dish, but the poison had no effect on him; for the Life of the world was protecting him. 60. 'He who became poison himself at the request of Pralhād and also saved the life of

Mirābāi, he, Shri Hari, protected him in his calamity.' 61. In this way Angada advised his own mind and related the whole event to his wife, saying, 'We must not stay here any longer.' Then he became indifferent to all worldly things, 62. and taking his wife with him he started for Jagannāth.

King Rāyasing now became very angry and sent an army after him to capture him. 63. His orders were, 'Capture Angada at once and take the diamond from him.' The minister took a large army with him and surrounded him. 64. Then Angada took the diamond and showed it to all and at once threw it into the deep river saying, 'O Jagannāth, may this reach Thee.' 65. Seeing it, the servants of Rāyasing searched for it in the water, when Angada said to them, 'Why do you bother yourself for nothing? 66. Jagannāth has taken away the diamond and it is now around his neck. If you do not believe it you can come along with me and I will show it to you.' 67. As the *bhakta* of Vishnu said this, the minister and the people wondered, so they all followed Angada to Jagannāth. 68. When they went to visit the god they could make out the diamond, for they saw it with their eyes. So they asked the priest, 'Who brought this and offered it here?' 69. The priest replied, 'At noon time four days ago the diamond fell before the god; 70. then we picked it up and laid it aside, when *Chakrapāni* (i. e., Vishnu) gave us a vision saying that the diamond should be put into a necklace and be offered to him 71. "My *bhakta*, Prince Angada, has given it to me." So as we had this vision we put it in the necklace.' 72. As the minister heard this he was astonished and in a detailed letter he told the story to King Rāyasing. 73. After reading the letter the king very much repented and said, 'I persecuted my brother in vain.' Then he wrote a letter pledging himself and

asked him to return: 74. 'You are a servant of Vishnu with a direct manifestation of God and I was ignorant of it; so I went after what was perishable and hated you; 75. now don't think of what has passed; come and meet me with love; I ask you to do this in the name of Shri Jagannāth.' 76. After writing this letter he sent it by the hand of a messenger, and as Angada read it he wondered at heart, 77. saying, 'Through the mercy of Shri Hari, branches and leaves have sprouted from a stone as it were, or iron has become brilliant gold without the touch of the *paris* (touchstone).' 78. Saying this he joined his hands palm to palm and pleaded with Jagannāth, 'Through Thy mercy, even foes become friends. 79. O Brother of the helpless, O Cloud of mercy, this is my experience. Thou dost accept a leaf of *tulsī* from me and increase my glory.' 80. Then taking leave of the god, Prince Angada at once returned to the capital and Rāyasing began to enjoy the devotion of Vishnu on account of good company.

THE STORY OF QUEEN GUNAVANTI, WIFE OF
KING MĀDHOSING

81. There was once a king named Mādhosing, whose wife Gunavanti was possessed of many good qualities. She was the daughter of king Prithu and the Lord of Vainkunt was pleased with her. 82. When she was with her husband she had a son endowed with many good qualities and to serve her, her husband gave her a maid, 83. who was always moving her lips, for she had a great love for the name of God. The queen asked the maid, 'Tell me what you are always muttering.' 84. She replied, 'I remember Shri Hari, for this perishable body will pass away all in a moment.' 85. So Gunavanti earnestly requested her, 'Please tell me how to sing the praises of God.' Seeing her devotion the maid gladly agreed. 86. She made her take a bath and

then made her worship Vishnu and told her, 'Contemplate Shri Krishna who lives in Vraja.' 87. The advice of the maid made a deep impression on the mind of the queen and her mind became absorbed in the feet of Shri Krishna, and from her eyes tears flowed. 88. She forgot everything else and did not even think of her husband or her son. So the king felt anxious and said to himself, 'What has taken possession of her?' 89. One day the prince asked his wife, 'Tell me why it is that I see you in an unconscious state.' 90. The wife replied to her husband, 'What is the good of telling you? I am absorbed in the contemplation of Shri Krishna, but I do not have a direct vision of Him.' 91. After saying this the beautiful lady shed tears, but the king grew angry with her, and looked at her with cruel eyes. 92. As Gunavanti saw this she was terror-stricken, but when the good woman closed her eyes: he saw before her the *sagu* form of God, 93. with four arms, and the complexion was beautiful to look at; He had a divine yellow robe around His waist, and He wore a crown, earrings and garlands of flowers and leaves: just to look at Him gave a sense of rest to one's eyes. 94. Seeing that image before her she made a prostrate bow with true devotion, and the god placed His hand on her head and uttered this blessing of assurance: 95. 'Do not have the least fear while I am your helper.' As the Husband of Rukmini thus spoke, Gunavanti opened her eyes. 96. The king did not know she had just had a manifestation of God, and he angrily said to her, 'Don't be crazy. 97. From to-day please do not bring any saints and *sādhus* to this house'; and the king told the maid to remember this order. 98. 'For a saint came to my house and gave his *mantra* to my wife and made her sing the praises of God day and night, thus destroying my family life. 99. So from to-day let not any such thief come to the palace.' With this command, the

prince left for a distant country. 100. However the queen had the sacred water (in which the feet of the saint were washed) brought stealthily by her maid, and she drank it every day, and was continually given up to the worship of Vishnu. 101. Now the minister of the king was also devoid of devotion, and he learned of this, so he reported the matter in writing to Mādhosing, 102. saying, 'In spite of your orders to the contrary, she (the queen) has not given up thinking of Vishnu, for she drinks the water of the feet of the saint. Let this be known to your majesty.' 103. The husband therefore became greatly enraged. Then Gunavanti had her head shaved by a barber, for she was impressed with the indifference to worldly things. 104. She also took off the glass and gold bracelets from off her hands and wore ornaments of the beads of *tulsī* ; then making an upright mark on her forehead with the *gopichandan* clay (the Vaishnav mark), she became a *barāgīn* (i. e., a female mendicant). 105. Bringing the *sādhus* and saints to the palace she worshipped them with all the rites of worship and with an indifferent heart always remembered Shri Hari. 106. The minister reported this matter also, and then the king advised the son of Gunavanti. 107. Outwardly the son spoke words which pleased his father, but inwardly he was satisfied and said, ' Her family life is a success.' 108. The king was very angry at seeing the spiritual asceticism of his wife, so he sent four men with orders to kill her. 109. Gunavanti was worshipping Vishnu when the murderers came and they sat watching her. 110. This was taking place outside but Gunavanti did not know of it. Then the Lord of Vaikunth, the God of gods, took the form of a tiger, 111. and the fierce tiger suddenly entered the temple, at which sight Gunavanti was astonished and worshipped it. 112. This beautiful lady offered it sandalwood paste, rice and garlands of

flowers with love and said, 'O God, why Thou hast become a tiger I do not know.' 113. After the completion of the worship she came out to worship the saint, when the murderers tried to catch hold of her but the tiger sprung at them. 114. The tiger being very fierce killed all the four men and bit the others who through fear took to their heels. 115. Then the tiger returned to the temple of Hari and at once disappeared. The *bhaktas* shouted a cry of victory and their hearts were filled with astonishment. 116. They said, 'In order to help His *bhakta*, God assumed the form of a tiger today, and the men who had come to take the life of the queen were killed by it.' 117. The whole event became known to Mādhosing, that Bhagwant (i. e., God) in the form of a tiger had killed the four men. 118. Then he repented deeply at heart and said, 'I really am sinful and evil-minded, for I had sent murderers, but Shripati rushed to her help.' 119. Then he wrote to the minister, 'Gunavantī is serving the saint; without hesitation give her as much money as she may need to spend.' 120. Then taking their armies, both brothers returned to their capital, and on their way the great river was in flood, so they both sat in a ferry boat. 121. As the boat came into the middle of the stream it began to sink and all the people were confused and could think of no device. 122. But as they thought of Gunavantī, the boat went to the other side; then entering their capital they soon arrived at the temple of Hari. 123. The elder brother of Mādhosing fell prostrate before Gunavantī and said, 'No sooner did we utter your name than we got safely across the stream.' 124. Through the influence of the company of the good, both the brothers became full of devotion; they also began to serve the saints and their character took on a new impression of righteousness.

THE STORY OF KUVARĀBĀI, THE DAUGHTER
OF THE ROYAL PRIEST

125. There is another intensely interesting story ; listen to it, oh pious people, about a royal priest to whom a jewel of a daughter was born. 126. From her childhood she had love for the praises of Shri Hari. Her name was Kuvarābāi and she was always indifferent to worldly things. 127. Day by day she grew and then her husband came to take her to his house. Seeing him, the sensitive woman felt concerned, 128. and said, 'The pleasures derived from sensual objects are perishable, and their enjoyment results in many grievances ; on their account one has to experience three kinds of hell, missing the true pleasure derived from the knowledge of self. 129. By cohabiting with the husband there will be an issue, and I shall be laid away by love, and becoming ensnared by illusion I shall not be united with God.' 130. Six hours of the night thus passed in thinking and then she took off all her ornaments and went out of the town. 131. But as she found the gates of the town closed, she thought of Shri Krishna, and God at once opened the gates for her and let her out. 132. Kuvarā assumed the garb of a poor and helpless young woman on her way, and the bundle of ornaments which she had she fastened round her waist. 133. In this helpless state she went to Vrindāvan and bathing at the Chiraghāt she visited Shri Krishna. 134. There Kuvarābāi joined her hands palm to palm and pleaded with God, 'Now free me from the snares of this earthly life;' and she fell at the feet of the god. 135. She then distributed her ornaments to the Vaishnavs, and struggling in her mind the beautiful lady sat there, 136. pleading, 'O God of gods, Lord of the world, look on me with an eye of mercy ; give me the sight of Thy *sagun* form, and destroy the nets of this earthly life.' 137. Contemplating in this way she fasted for three days and then the Life of

the world met with her in his *sagun* form. 138. Keeping his assuring hand on her head he said, 'Now have no anxiety ; I, Shri Hari, with the *sudarshan* disc in my hand will protect you in all ways.' 139. The Life of the world said to Kuvārī, ' Now go and sit at the Rādhākund.' Seeing this much she felt comforted, 140. and went, and sat near the Rādhākund where God fed her. In the meantime her father came searching for her and he was glad to find her there. 141. Then he advised his daughter, ' How is it that you ran away from your house ? Thereby you have brought blame on our family, for which we feel ashamed.' 142. Kuvārī replied, ' How is it that you are still panting after a worldly life, although you are sixty years of age ? Because indifference to worldly things has not been aroused in your mind. 143. This human body is perishable and the *Māyā* of God is false ; it is, as it were, the shade of jugglery. You should think of the Lord Shri Krishna, for thus alone is there any hope of any good action.' 144. As he listened to the advice of his daughter the father liked it and he said to Kuvārī, ' Come back home now. 145. Don't have any hesitation at heart, but at your pleasure worship Shri Hari. Don't go to your husband's house. Accept my advice.' 146. After her father had entreated her in many ways Shri Hari told her in a vision to accompany her father : 147. ' Whenever you remember Me, I will destroy all your disturbances, however great they may be.' As the God of gods thus commanded her she returned home with her father. 148. There she erected a temple and installed in it an image of Vishnu, worshipping Him with all the forms of worship and with love in her heart. 149. If any *sādhus*, saints and Vaishnavs came to her house she worshipped them also, and at night there was the praise-service of Hari which touched the heart when listened to. 150. In the company of Kuvarābāi many began to enjoy the

worship of God, and her fame reached the ears of the King of Sekhāvat. 151. He said to the priest, 'Your daughter is possessed of a very good character and has given herself up to the worship of Shri Hari, so we have heard. 152. She sings beautifully, so we learn indirectly.' After saying this the king went that day to the house of the priest, 153. and he saw the beautiful image of Vishnu in the state-chair with garments, adornments and ornaments, while Kuvarābāi sat before Him and splendidly sang the praises of God. 154. The clamour of cymbals, *vinā* and drum was like the very Brahm-sound incarnate; fastening small bells on her feet she danced with love. 155. She pleaded with the One dark as a cloud in her singing and dancing, and tears of joy streamed down her face as her throat became choked with emotion. 156. There were many pious people there and the king sat in the midst of all quite overpowered with a lustful desire as he gazed on the beautiful form of the girl. 157. His heart was pierced with the arrow of passion, for his mind was not absorbed in the singing of the good deeds of God; but his eyes rolled with the intoxication of passion and he felt drowsy every moment. 158. In his dream he saw the marvel of a great river in flood with volumes of water in the stream. 159. On the other bank he saw Kuvarābāi standing as if addressing him, 'O prince, sinful as you are, come to me.' 160. Seeing this vision the king got up and in his mind he pondered over the meaning of it and repentance came to him. 161. Said he, 'Kuvarābāi is surely on the other bank of the earthly river, and I, sinful as I am, how shall I be able to cross the ocean of this worldly existence?' 162. In his repentance the king devotedly made her a low bow and taking her *mantra*, he began the worship of Shri Vishnu.

THE STORY OF GIRIDHARLĀL OF VRINDĀVAN

163. At Vrindāvan there lived one Giridharlāl, very

pious and of a good character; through the power of his devotion, knowledge and indifference to worldly things, he made *Chakrapānī* (i. e., Vishnu) subservient to him. 164. He had compassion for all creatures and his tongue uninterruptedly repeated the names of Hari; he humbly gave himself up to the service of the saints and considered them as God. 165. Tying small bells on his feet, he performed a *kīrtan* in singing, and the parts of Rādhā and Krishna were lovingly played. 166. One day he went to the temple of Vishnu to play the *Rāsa* (i. e., the play of Rādhā and Krishna) when many people had gathered to watch it and had asked him to get up and perform a *kīrtan*. 167. Going to the image of Shri Krishna he prostrated himself before it. His heart was in great trouble and he said therefore, 168. ' I have left at home the garments of the different parts, and if I go to fetch them, I shall be late in returning.' 169. Having said this he looked into the face of the god and immediately saw there a pile of cloth of gold; the people witnessed this striking marvel. 170. They said, ' Shri Hari likes his *Rāsa*, therefore this marvellous event has come to pass. God becomes subservient to His *bhakta*, and increases the reputation of the saints.' 171. Saying this they made a bow to Giridhar, and on that day the performance was a most exquisite one and all the people sat still like a statue, 172. remarking, 'The games which were played in the Krishna *avatār* we clearly see with our eyes.' All fell into a state of unconsciousness. Blessed be the festival and the day! 173. The reputation of Giridhar spread very widely and many great people respected him. There was then another marvellous event; listen to it with reverence, oh pious ones. 174. Giridhar drank with love the holy water in which the feet of Vaishnav *bhaktas*, true or false, had been washed, regardless of their caste: 175. There is no greater means of salvation than the service of saints, and with this resolve he accepted

the state of a *videhī* (i.e., one bodily unconscious). 176. A *bairāgī* (or mendicant) who was a *bhakta* of Vishnu died suddenly and Giridhar worshipped his dead body. 177. Offering to it garlands of *tulsi* and smearing it with the *gopīchandan* clay (the Vaishnav mark) with love, he then washed its feet and drank the holy water. 178. As the Brāhmans saw this they reproved him and said, 'You have drunk the water in which the feet of the dead body were washed; you are fallen from the path of works.' 179. You have given up all religious rites and conduct and have brought pollution; through you there will be a confusion of castes. 180. A dead body belongs to a low caste and with love you have taken as holy the water in which its feet were washed.' Hearing the speech of the Brāhmans, Giridhar replied. 181. 'The saints have descended into the world to save it; they are without births or deaths; they are, as it were, the Brahman which pervades the whole universe and in which there is no duality.' 182. Hearing him the Brāhmans said, 'You speak words of philosophy, but unless you show some miracle we shall not believe you.' 183. If the saints are without births and deaths, then bring this dead body to life, or we shall excommunicate you and we will not admit you to sit with us at dinner.' 184. As the earth-gods spoke, Giridhar fell into a great difficulty, and with a concentrated mind he closed his eyes. 185. Bringing to his mind the image of Shri Krishna, the Lord of Vaikunth came to his help in his difficulty and all the Brāhmans saw the corpse get up and sit there. 186. At this all the earth-gods prostrated themselves before Giridhar and said, 'The Husband of Rukmini is your helper and he has shown a marvellous event.' 187. The Lord of Vaikunth increases the reputation of His *bhakta*, and by merely hearing about it the pious cross the worldly ocean.

THE STORY OF THE 'SUPERMAN' NĀRĀYANSWĀMĪ

188. Listen to one more life that is very interesting, of a 'superman' named Nārāyanswāmī. First he became a *sannyāsī* and conquered the six human foes. 189. Devotion, wisdom and indifference to worldly things became his fitting ornaments, and having acquired the state of unconsciousness he roamed over the earth as a *paramahansa*.^{*} 190. He had truly acquired the state of being himself the Brahm (i. e., the all-pervading essence), for he considered the whole universe as himself; the idea of duality never occurred to him and he forgot all consciousness of body. 191. He looked on prince and pauper as he did on an atom, and in all these he saw the supreme and all-pervading essence. He accepted the charitable alms of all castes when a marvellous event took place. 192. At the *Sinhastha* festival (i. e., when the sun is once every twelve years in the Leo Zodiacal sign) there were crowds of pilgrims gathered at Nāsik and at Tryambak, and he himself had followed them in his nude bodily state. 193. Bands of *gosāvis* of the *giri* and *puri* sects came there at Tryambak, as did the Bhārati *sannyāsīs*, and Nārāyanswāmī naturally came to their *math* (hermitage) begging. 194. The *mahant* (the chief of the *gosāvis*) as he saw him (the *paramahansa*) felt satisfied, and seating him by his side he requested him saying, 'Oh swāmī, please come to dine with us.' 195. The *gosāvi* ordered his disciples to give him a plate and the food was served when he who was bodily unconscious (Nārāyanswāmī) sat down to dine. 196. In his nude state he appeared like the Lord of Kailās (i. e., Shiva), and though he ate a large quantity of food he did not say 'enough.' 197. All the food cooked for the *gosāvis* was served to him, and eating it all he belched (as a sign of satisfaction), at which the *gosāvis* felt

* See Appendix on this word.

astonished. 198. Nārāyaṃswāmi was bodily unconscious, so he had no desire to take water, and though the *gōṣāvis* offered him water yet he would not take it. 199. From there he went into a forest and slept under the shade of a tree, the *mahant* ordering his disciples to go there and watch. 200. Filling up a large earthen pot with water, the *gōṣāvis* sat near him; but for three days and three nights he did not awake. 201. On the fourth day water was offered him as he awoke, but he would not accept it; then he went into the sacred place (Tryambak), and performed a miracle. 202. From the drain of a large edifice some stinking water was running, and he drank a leather jarful of the water. 203. Brāhmins who had come there to the temple to give the god a sprinkling bath by repeating the *Laghu-rudra* hymns of the *Vedas** were repeating these hymns from the *Vedas* and were worshipping the God Shri Tryambakeshwar. 204. Nārāyaṃswāmi entered the temple in his unconscious state and asked the Brāhmins what they were doing. 205. The earth-gods (i. e., Brāhmins) said they were giving the god a sprinkling bath, and Nārāyaṃswāmi said he himself would hold the sprinkling pot over the god. 206. †Then he poured dirty water right on the emblem (of Shiva) and all were astonished and laughed. 207. The earth-gods (i. e., Brāhmins) angrily said he must continue to do so as long as the *Laghu-rudra* continued, or else they would inflict serious injury upon him. 208. With this resolve they kept on repeating the hymns, but even after the completion of the sprinkling bath, Nārāyaṃswāmi did not stop.† 209. Then the Brāhmins praised him, saying, 'He is without doubt the Lord of Kailās

* See Appendix on this.

† The three verses between the two asterisks, verses 206, 207, 208, are here given in paraphrase not translation.

(i. e. Shiva) himself ; he is without consciousness of body, for it is his natural state. 210. Just then a gentleman of Nāsik came as a pilgrim to Tryambakeshwar, and he had a lean horse with him which died on the way. 211. The man with his wife, children, and retinue sat on the route while the other pilgrims passed on, and he was in danger from the fear of robbers. 212. Thus finding himself in a very difficult position, the Brāhman was thinking of God when Nārāyanswāmī happened to come there and the Brāhman related to him the sad occurrence. 213. Said he, ' My horse died on the way, and I have to sit in this jungle with my children and retinue.' Then Nārāyanswāmī did a most wonderful miracle ; let the skilful hearers listen to it with reverence. 214. Nārāyanswāmī ordered the horse to rise and to carry his master to his own place, and the horse at once became alive. 215. It shook its ears and stood up ; then the Brāhman saddled it and put all the load on it and returned home. 216. As soon as the load was taken down the horse died ; such is the great power of the saints ; they are no different from God. 217. The God of gods, the Husband of Rukminī, will cause me to proceed with the composition of this work. I, Mahipati, am His badge-hearer and the suppliant of the saints.

218. *Swasti* (Peace) ! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmṛit*. By merely listening to it one's heart's desires are fulfilled. May the pious and loving *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the forty-sixth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XLVII

STORIES OF THREE BRĀHMANS AND THREE MUSLIMS

INVOCATION

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Victory to Thee, oh Brother of the helpless, the Mine of compassion, merciful to His *bhaktas*, the Ocean of mercy, the voluntary Actor, the supreme God, the Saviour of the world, oh Pāndurang !
 2. Compassionate to Thy *bhaktas*, oh Husband of Rukmini, Thy fame is illimitable and endless ; none is able to measure it, for in trying to do so the talents of all became wearied. 3. Thou art without attributes and form, without action and without ceremony, but in order to advocate the cause of Thy *bhaktas*, Thou dost assume a form with attributes. 4. First Thou dost create an evil inclination in those not devoted to Thee, and through them Thou dost bring about the persecution of Thy *bhaktas*. But as the devoted think of Thee, Thou dost overcome all their great difficulties. 5. No sooner does the fame of Thy saints fall on the ears of the wicked than the inclinations of their heart undergo a change, for repentance destroys their evil actions and righteousness arises.

6. In the last chapter the touching story of how the horse (of a pilgrim) died on the way and how Nārāyaṇ-swāmī at once brought it to life was related and made the great Brāhmans wonder. 7. The behaviour of the saints is beyond one's understanding ; through the jugglery of the *māyā* of Vishnu they appear to be human beings but in truth they are the all-pervading *Brahm*.

THE STORY OF RĀMKRISHNA THE BRĀHMAN

8. There was once a Brāhman named Rāmkrishna, a saint of profound understanding, who had conquered the

six human foes and by the power of his service had made God his debtor. 9. He worshipped Vishnu, sang the praises of Hari and uttered the names of God with his lips continually. He had compassion for all beings and looked on the whole world as himself. 10. Casting away all desires he gave his *mantra* to the people, and in the *Kali Yuga* (evil age) he descended as an *avatār* to save the world. 11. He went to the city of Baroda where he had a large number of followers, and a woman took his *mantra* without the knowledge of her husband, 12. who, upon learning of it indirectly, devised a cunning plan and said to his wife, 13. 'I am going to another town where I will stay for some days'; but after saying this he hid in the cellar of his house. 14. The reason for this cunning action was that if she brought her *guru* to the house he would be able to see their conduct and punish them. 15. But his wife was very devoted and she was glad at heart. for she thought of bringing the saviour of the world (i. e., her *guru*) to the house and serve him. 16. Disclosing this intention to a neighbouring friend, both of them went to the *swāmī* and gave him the invitation. 17. The *sadguru* said to her, 'Your husband is not at home and if he knows (of my coming to you) he will trouble you in many ways. 18. Mother, as we eat your food, why bother yourself about anything else?' As she heard him say this, tears fell from her eyes. 19. and she said, 'We women are ever dependent on others, so I do not know when I shall have an opportunity to serve the *swāmī*. Please purify my house by your presence.' Imploring him thus, she clasped the feet of her *guru*. 20. Seeing her sincere devotion the *sadguru* said, 'All right.' Then she did the cooking and made all preparations for worship. 21. Bringing the *sadguru* to her house she placed him on a grand seat, and her husband who had secreted himself in the cellar came out at once. 22. Angrily he drew a

weapon and pointed it towards his wife, but as he looked at the *sadguru* he appeared to him to be a woman. 23. Seeing such a miracle he repented at heart, gave up all hatred, and fell at his feet in true devotion. 24. Seeing his resolve, (the *sadguru*) assumed his previous form, and the man then made supplication to the *guru* and became his disciple. 25. So both husband and wife served the saint with sincere devotion, and the man who was formerly very bad now humbled himself before the saint ; such is the power of the saints.

THE STORY OF RĀMCHANDRABHAT

26. There was a very learned man named Rāmchandrābhat, well versed in the *Vedas* and the *Shāstras*, but he was quite free from pride. 27. Expert in all the *Shāstras*, he did not discuss about earthly things with anyone ; he had restrained all sense of egoism, and had given himself up to the worship of Shri Hari. 28. He never courted the favour of anyone, but looked alike on prince and pauper, and he supported his family without begging. 29. He daily took his bath, offered up his prayers, and performed the five great household oblation services ; if at meal-time any guest happened to come he never refused hospitality. 30. Worshipping Vishnu and performing the song-service of God, he continually repeated God's names and in the afternoon read the *Bhāgavat Purān*. 31. Seeing his great resolve, God granted him a direct manifestation. This noble Vaishnav lived in Delhi, and listen to the wonderful event that took place. 32. The Muslim monarch there was then building an extensive palace in the city, for which he had pulled down the houses of the poor and had given them money as compensation. 33. To secure other land he paid double the price, and the wall of the palace reached the house of Rāmchandrābhat. 34. The minister of the king sent him

word by a messenger that he would have another house built for him where he should go and stay. 35. But Rāmchandrabhat felt troubled at heart and he went to live at Benares. Then Shri Hari appeared in the form of the Kāzī (i.e., a Muslim judge) in the dream of the Emperor and said to him, 36. 'Rāmchandrabhat is my very life; pacify him and bring him here; therein lies your well-being; my saying can never be otherwise.' 37. As the Emperor saw this dream he was full of fear and he gave orders to the minister to go and bring him (Rāmchandrabhat) there. 38. The minister went to Benares and made a bow to the *bhakta* of Vishnu and said, 'Do me the favour of coming back to your house (in Delhi)'. 39. With great entreaty he took him to Delhi and his house was left untouched; for, said they, Shripati was his helper. 40. On account of the company of the saints all the people began to enjoy devotion to God; and the Muslim Emperor came to visit him and bowed to him humbly. 41. Thus does the Husband of Rukmini increase the reputation of his servants.

THE STORY OF KĀZĪ MAHAMMAD

There is another interesting story; may the hearers listen to it with reverence. 42. There lived a Muslim Kāzī named Mahammad who always repeated the names of God and never told an untruth. 43. Even if the Emperor offered him money he would not touch it, for he ate food of his own labour; listen how it was. 44. His wife was very skilful at embroidery and she sold it cheap in the market, so they ate the food thus earned. 45. The Emperor sent him cases for decision and having properly thought them over, he then delivered his judgment. 46. He would not 'take the side' of either a Hindu or a Muslim, for he did not covet money, and falsehood had never touched his tongue. 47. To him gold and earth were

of equal value, for where there is desire there are also sins. 48. Desire and thirst are the seed of dishonour, and when these are cast out from the mind one becomes revered in all the three worlds. 49. Kāzī Mahammad knew this and he looked on cowdung and gold alike, hence his decisions were thoroughly justifiable, and he advised both parties alike. 50. But he had no male issue, having only one daughter who had abundance of wealth, and her husband was a soldier. 51. He commanded elephants, horses, palanquins, and chariots and an army of five hundred soldiers, and the son-in-law was always ready for his royal service. 52. In this way many days rolled on and then the daughter had a son but the son-in-law died. 53. The son-in-law had had in his service a Hindu steward, who formed a cunning plan to usurp all the belongings by forging documents of loan in his name. 54. At that critical time the evil-minded one said to the wife and son of the deceased, 'First manage to pay off the loan and then think of burying him.' 55. They replied, 'When the master was living no mention was made of debt, then where can the debt come from? We think this is all falsely got up.' 56. The Emperor said that Kāzī Mahammad would decide the case, and the intestines were taken out from the dead body which was filled with saffron and musk. 57. The dead body of the son-in-law was brought to the father-in-law, both his daughter and her son weeping loudly and bitterly. 58. The evil-minded and sinful steward said to them, 'First manage to pay off his debts and then give him burial.' 59. He then bribed the soldiers of the army so that all told the same falsehood. 60. As they insisted that Kāzī Mahammad must decide the case, there was a great quarrel, the daughter weeping bitterly. 61. The Kāzī knew what was true and what was false, but he could not say it openly, for the people

might think he was acting with bias, since the matter concerned his own daughter. 62. Being therefore in a great fix, he began to think of the feet of Shri Hari and said, 'O God, manage the thing in such a way that the public blame will not fall on me.' 63. The Kāzī Mahammad therefore said to the dead body, 'Get up at once and explain the accounts to the steward and then go to the town of death.' 64. No sooner had the words escaped his lips than a marvellous event occurred; for the glory of the saints is wonderful indeed and in hearing of it the ears are satisfied. 65. Just as a man after sleep sits up and comes to wakefulness, this dead body got up and had its clothes brought. 66. He wrung his beard with his hand and with bloodshot eyes he pointed his sword at his steward and said: 'Explain my accounts to me at once.' 67. Seeing this marvellous event the evil-minded steward began to tremble, and he caught the feet of Kāzī Mahammad and implored, 'Save my life, 68. for I tried to hide the papers and drew a large debt in the name of the master; I forged false documents with my own hand.' 69. He also showed what wealth he had secreted and then the son-in-law took leave of his father-in-law and breathed his last. 70. All the people felt astonished as they watched this wonderful event, and they clasped the feet of Kāzī Mahammad and exclaimed, 'The glory of the saints is beyond human understanding.' 71. Then his daughter imploringly said to her father, 'Bring my my husband to life again and let him live.' The grandson also with love fell at his feet; and in answer the Kāzī said, 72. 'If I bring him to life today, others will put me in difficulty, and that will bring to light my earthly desire and I shall not be able to bear that slander.' 73. After saying this to his daughter he carried out the funeral of the son-in-law and his fame spread among the people who rushed to the place to see him. 74. Six months

after this wonderful event the wife also died and Kāzī Mahammad said to himself, 'I must not any longer remain in this mortal world.' 75. He was buried in Badāsomori and a tomb was erected over his grave; and those who have stored up good merit obtain a sight of him even to this day. 76. A great tiger comes daily and dusts the tomb with his tail, and fragrant flowers fall there daily. 77. Although he was a Muslim he did not permit anyone to kill an animal, for he had compassion on all creatures and he looked on all other people as himself.

THE STORY OF THE MUSLIM KING BALAKHBUKHĀRĪ

78. There was a Muslim king named Balakhbukhārī who ruled righteously and made his subjects happy. 79. In his kingdom there was not to be found any weak or beggarly person; he did not trouble anyone but he was always given to lustful enjoyment. 80. Through the store of merit from his former birth he enjoyed life in various ways and after the lapse of some time his good luck arrived. 81. Calling his eight ministers he asked them to give him their advice and said, 'Please tell me to which *sadguru* I should go and make supplication.' 82. As he asked them this question, the chief minister said in answer, 'In Vārānāsī (Benares) there lives Kabīr the *bhakta* of God who is the embodiment of devotion and wisdom. 83. He is expert in both Hindu and Muhammadan ways, and we have heard a good deal of his reputation; therefore make your supplication to him. 84. So one day King Balakhbukhārī went to Vārānāsī (Benares) and making a prostrate bow to Kabīr took his initiatory *mantra*. 85. Kabīr told the prince to worship Shri Rāma; the cause that created in him indifference to worldly things is worthy of note. 86. In his harem there were sixteen hundred queens, all mines of beauty, and besides these

there was the chief queen. The king was always given to lustful enjoyment and also deeply engaged in his royal duties. 87. Once the king was sitting in his court and in his dormitory his maid was arranging flowers on his bed. 88. As the king was detained by a private talk with his minister he was late in going to his bedroom where the maid waiting for him became overpowered by sleep. 89. She was sitting reclining against the bedstead and had rested her head on the cot, and sleep having come upon her she had lost all consciousness of body. 90. In the meantime Balakhbukhārī entering his bedroom suddenly, flew into a rage when he saw the slave fast asleep there. 91. Then he had her caned by a servant, but the beautiful slave laughed uproariously without the least sign of sorrow. 92. The king felt astonished at heart and asked the slave, 'O you beautiful one, tell me at once why you were laughing?' 93. The slave replied, 'If for merely resting my head on the bed I got so much of a beating that blood is coming out of my body, 94. then what punishment will there be in store for you, who sleep on a bed upon which are spread a maund and a quarter of flowers? For this reason I laughed. 95. If a fish that swallows a lifeless bait of flour loses its life at once, then what will those suffer who kill animals full of life?' 96. Hearing this answer of the slave maid the king's heart melted with repentance and abandoning his kingdom he left his capital. 97. Though young, healthy and lustrous, having sixteen hundred queens and eighteen hundred thousand horses, the king deserted all these and set out. 98. He said, 'Youth, body, and kingdom are all perishable, and I have not made my life a success; now I must do something by which I shall be united with Shri Hari.' [There is a Hindī verse in the *Sāki* metre thus:—]

'Balakh the king deserted for Thy sake, O God, his sixteen hundred queens and eighteen hundred thousand horses and his capital city.'

99. Thus did Balakhbukhārī start off with repentance in his heart. He let no one accompany him and he told every one to go back. 100. I think his action was like that of King Bharata who deserted the earth surrounded by ocean and entered a forest; 101. or like King Bhartrihari in whom indifference to worldly things was aroused on seeing his wife's adultery; in the same way at the word of the slave girl, Balakhbukhārī started. 102. He was not troubled by hunger, thirst, cold or heat, for he had acquired a state of freedom from desire and gave himself up to singing the praises of Shri Rāma. 103. The *bhakta* Kabir who was the worshipper of Vishnu explained to him the way of worship, and he brought that form into his mind and worshipped it mentally every day. 104. In this way four days passed when God gave him a manifestation, for the Husband of Lakshmī met with him in his *saṅga* form. 105. If he happened to see a saint on the way he remained with him over night. By chance he saw at one place a *fakīr* (or Muslim mendicant) free from all desires, so he stayed at his place. 106. The *fakīr* begged no food at all, nor did he trouble anyone on his own account. But he put God into great difficulty and He sent him bread. 107. Such was the condition of the *fakīr* at whose place Balakhbukhārī arrived. The *fakīr* said to him, 'This is not a fit place for you. 108. How many days is it since indifference to worldly things was born in you?' The king replied, 'The practice is quite new. 109. But through the mercy of the *saḍguru* all the snares of my earthly life have vanished, though only eight days have passed; know this to be the truth.' 110. The master of the *math* (hermitage) feared at heart when he heard this and said, 'God sends me only two pieces of bread. He (i. e., the king) would share them, so he must be sent out.' 111. He therefore said to Balakhbukhārī, 'You have only recently accepted

the renunciation of the world, therefore go and stay out of the *math*; that is the only place fit for you.' 112. The king who was full of indifference to worldly things said, 'Surely;' and he went to live outside. Then the One dark as a cloud performed a miracle; listen to it, oh pious *bhaktas*. 113. To the *fakīr* who stayed there permanently God sent bread and vegetable, while Balakhbukhārī was stricken with hunger but had no desires. 114. The Lord of Lakshmi understanding this protected him in quite a different way; for a plate studded with jewels descended on earth on which daintily cooked food was served. 115. There was also a drinking pot of gold which Lakshmi took in her hand and with favour gave him a dinner. 116. The master of the *math* saw this from a distance and exclaimed, 'His indifference is only eight days old, while I have been labouring at it all my life; 117. there is no justice at the house of God.' So he would not eat any bread and he went to bed with an empty stomach. At night he had a dream; 118. for in the form of a *fakīr*, Vishwambhar (i. e., Vishnu) said to him, 'Balakhbukhārī who is staying outside has deserted his whole kingdom. 119. Being free from desires he has wholly given himself up to my worship, therefore I, *Chakrapānī* (i. e., Vishnu), protect him every day. 120. But you wish to have a kingdom in future, therefore I send you bread and vegetable. You do not take account of actions in your former birth. What right have you then to be displeased with anyone? 121. Just as you sow the seed, so you reap the fruit in the end. I, the Lord of the world, conduct myself in union with former merits.' 122. At this manifestation the master of the *math* was astonished, and going to Balakhbukhārī he made him a low bow. 123. As Balakhbukhārī proceeded he saw on the way a large town where in a *math* there were many *fakīrs* whom he approached. 124. But as they saw him

without the signs of their sect, viz., *Sailī Tasabī* (a rosary), *Kanthā Mankā*, and *Rāna*, they would not let him come near them but drove him off. 125. There the Lord of Vaikunth appeared as the chief of the *fakīrs* and said; 'Like him there is no other person full of devotion in all the three worlds, 126. for he possesses in his heart the marks of your sect.' Then He disappeared on the spot; 127. and all the *fakīrs* felt astonished at heart saying, 'He is one who has had a direct manifestation of God.' So with great honour they brought him into the *math*. 128. For the whole universe looks with an eye of compassion on anyone whom Shri Hari helps; and God with his disc *Sudarshan* in hand protects him in many ways. 129. He does not think either of his caste or his family line; but there must be the reality of loving devotion; and Balakh-bukhārī always had before him the vision of Him who is merciful to the lowly.

THE STORY OF THE MUSLIM, SHAIKH FARĪD

130. There was a firmly devoted *bhakta* of God; listen to his life with reverence; for *Shārangdhar* (i. e., Vishnu) first put him to a severe test and then granted him a vision of himself. 131. Shaikh Farīd was a Muslim and the son of a widow. He said to his mother, 'Help me to meet God.' 132. His mother replied, 'God is not to be found everywhere; to obtain God one has to go through many troubles. 133. For the acquisition of Shri Hari the saints abandon all objects of sense; and being indifferent to worldly things some roam in the forests; 134. some observe celibacy and some sages observe penance; others examine their inner self so as to have the manifestation; 135. some abandon their family life and remain without food in a forest; some sing the praises of God; and some listen to His stories; 136. some perform good actions but have no desire for their fruit; some

strictly follow observances to please Vishnu; and some pass their nights in singing the praises of Hari; 137. some look upon others as themselves and give water and food to the hungry; some are saved through the service of the saints without letting their reputation suffer; 138. some practise the vow of pure speech and never utter a falsehood; with the tongue they always repeat the name of Hari without losing even a single moment of their life. 139. O darling child, some spend their body in obliging others; some sit in the *Vajrāsana* (i. e., the spiked bed posture) and thus practise *yoga*; 140. some acquire wealth by labour and spend it in a good cause; some serve a *sadguru* and give him their body, mind and fortune; 141. for the acquisition of Shri Hari these are the various ways; follow at once that one which is practicable to you.' 142. Shaikh Farid replied, 'O mother dear, I will wander in a forest without food, for then only will I see *Chakrapāni* (i. e., Vishnu); but please give me some bread.' 143. His mother asked, 'You say you want to give up food; then why do you ask for bread?' Shaikh Farid replied, 'I want it only to have the comfort of possession.' 144. So he took a little bread from his mother and tied it to his waist, and going into a forest he climbed a mountain and sat there. 145. The food which his mother had given him he neither untied nor looked at; he quenched his hunger by pulling and eating the leaves of trees; 146. for he had the wish in his heart that he should see Hari in his *sagun* form; but he had no manifestation and so was sad at heart. 147. Secretly, however, the Life of the world protected him, for he would not let His promise fail; and a strange event took place. 148. Some grocers were carrying sugar in bags on the backs of bullocks, and as they were proceeding he asked what they were carrying. 149. Although Shaikh Farid asked them this question in a humble manner the arrogant grocers replied,

'The bags contain earth.' 150. 'Very well,' he said; and the grocers received the fruit of their lie, for when they reached the town they saw that the sugar was indeed like earth. 151. Seeing this they said, 'We are lost, we do not know the strange course of fate; for we told lies to the saint, and this is the fruit.' 152. Their mind was then filled with repentance and when they returned by the same way the *bhakta* of Vishnu again asked them what they were carrying. 153. The grocers replied, 'We are carrying sugar on the bullocks.' Hearing this the ascetic said, 'Very well.' 154. And when the traders unpacked their sacks they saw in them sugar as before, and at this miracle they fell at his feet with sincere devotion. 155. Then they put some of the sugar in a plate and placed it before him, at the sight of which the noble Vaishnav ran away, 156. saying, 'In order to tempt me, God shows me the accomplishment of my penance; but I do not want it at all; for why should I have a hindrance which only creates hypocrisy?' 157. Now the bread which his mother had given him was all the time fastened around his waist but when he was stricken with hunger he plucked and ate the leaves of trees. 158. In this way twelve years rolled on but still he did not see the Saviour of the world; then he returned home; 159. and as soon as he got back home he bowed to his mother saying, 'Shrī Hari does not give me any sight of himself, therefore tell me some other way.' 160. And he showed his mother the bread which he had taken along with him, his own body being stiff like a piece of dry wood and his head being a mass of hair. 161. Said he, 'O mother, although I have laboured so much, still *Chakrapānī* (i. e., Vishnu) does not give me the vision.' Then his mother pulled out a lock of his hair with her hand, 162. from which action his body shrank; so his mother laughed and said, 'In the

same way, my darling child, have you given pain to the trees; 163. and for this wrong of yours Shri Hari has not given you His vision.' So he bowed again to his mother and said, 'Henceforth I will not practise any killing.' 164. Then he went once more into a great forest and ate the leaves that had fallen, and one day he tied himself to a tree. 165. Concentrating his mind he pleaded with Vishnu, 'O Purifier of the sinful, O merciful one, protect this lowly one.' 166. To a branch of the great tree his body was tied like dry wood when a crow came and pecked at him, and he said to it, 167. 'Bāpā, peck all my body and eat my flesh, but keep my two eyes just as they are, for I have a great desire to see Shri Hari.' 168. And as he said this, the tears fell from his eyes, and his throat was choked with love; the God who is dark like the cloud noticed this. 169. Hari who was unseen by his side now became visible, and with His own hands He untied the rope saying, 'My dear *bhakta*, you are much troubled; 170. to obtain me you have practised austerities for over twenty-four years.' After saying this the Life of the world gave him a loving embrace; 171. and as the Pervader of the world looked at him with an eye of mercy his body became divine. When Shaikh Farid opened his eyes he saw before him the Sporter in Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu), 172. with His four arms and beautiful complexion, and around His waist the divine silk robe; wearing also the crown, the earrings and the wild garlands of flowers, looking at all which cooled his eyes. 173. The divine face was beautiful to look at and attractive, and around His neck shone the Kaustubh jewel and the Vaijayanti garland, and on his feet were the *todars*. 174. Seeing that form he clasped His feet in pure devotion and worshipped *Chakrapānī* (i. e., Vishnu) in his love. 175. As Shaikh Farid saw this direct manifestation he stored it in his heart and then he left

the forest and returned home. 176. Bowing to his mother he said, 'Through your favour I have had the vision of Hari.' Feeling satisfied at heart she said to herself, 'There indeed seems to be a positive change in him.' 177. From that time the *bhakta* of Vishnu became widely known, for God increases the fame of his servants on earth.

THE STORY OF THE BRĀHMAN NĀRĀYANBHAT

178. Listen with reverence to another very delightful story, O pious people ; for by merely listening to it, bad actions will be destroyed. 179. On the banks of the Tāpī river there is a town called Tharner where lived a Brāhman named Nārāyanbhat who was good-natured and full of devotion and he contemplated Shri Hari. 180. Free entirely from desires he daily had his bath, and his morning and evening prayers; though lacking food and raiment at home his heart was always satisfied. 181. He sought no one's favour but looked on prince and pauper alike ; for he considered earth and wealth of equal value. 182. His heart being absorbed in the name and form of God, he was always in a state of bodily unconsciousness and he considered all perishable things as poison. 183. Spending his life in singing the praises of Shri Hari, he daily performed his bath and morning and evening prayers and if any unexpected guest arrived at meal-time he welcomed him as God Vishnu Himself. 184. And though there was a great lack of food and raiment in his house, he did not let his reputation suffer ; in order to test him, Shri Hari came to his house in the form of a Brāhman. 185. At that time Nārāyanbhat had gone to the bank of the Tāpī to perform his morning ablutions and his wife was performing the duties in the house when the Advocate of His *bhaktas* arrived there. 186. The Life of the world in the form of a Brāhman came and sat in the house and said to his wife, 'I am going on the

great pilgrimage (i. e., to Benares); 187. I have a *paris* (i. e., a touchstone) but I have no place to keep it safely; since you are free from desires, I have come to you.' 188. Then the Lord of Vaikunth had her bring some iron and as this was rubbed against the *paris* it suddenly turned into gold. 189. After showing this miracle Shri Hari said, 'Store up the gold in your house and so dispel all poverty; 190. and when Nārāyanbhat returns, give him my *namaskār*; it will be a couple of years before I return; 191. and as I return from the pilgrimage I will take back the *paris*; till then please preserve it, but let it not be talked of abroad.' 192. After saying this the Husband of Rukmini at once left, and the mistress of the house was satisfied at heart and said, 'God has freed me from all anxiety. 193. My husband ignores all earthly matters and sings the praises of God in the temple day and night; but I need provisions for this earthly life and God has been pleased with me.' 194. So she applied the *paris* to the big needle and the small needle which both turned to gold and with that she bought provisions. 195. After two watches of the day (i. e., noon) Nārāyanbhat returned home and found his wife full of satisfaction at heart, for she had been able to cook dainty foods. 196. So he asked his wife, 'Where did you get these fine provisions from?' Hearing this question from her husband she explained everything to him, 197. saying, 'A Brāhman came to the house and has gone on to Vārānaśi (i. e., Benares). He came to me and said, " You alone seem fit to be trusted. " 198. He had a *paris* which he rubbed against iron and turned it into gold; and after showing this wonderful event he said, " Preserve this thing of mine; 199. store up the gold in your house and therefore dispel pain and poverty; and I will return after two years; 200. and when you have fulfilled your needs return it to me." Saying this he went

away. This is indeed wonderful, 201. for I have made some gold in the house and taken it to the market, and with it bought the provisions and done this fine cooking; 202. so from today you need not concern yourself about your family life; merely remember *Bhagwant* (i. e., God) at heart and sing His praises.' 203. Hearing these things from his wife the heart of the noble Vaishnav melted with repentance and he said, ' If I involve myself in such worldly hindrances, the Husband of Rukminī will be far from me.' 204. After saying this he asked his wife for the *parīs* and threw it into the Tāpī along with the gold made from it. 205. Thus freeing himself from all hindrances the *bhakta* of Vishnu returned home, and taking an unexpected guest with him to dine he dined with love. 206. The wife said to him, ' If the man comes to our house and asks me for the *parīs* what shall I give him ? ' 207. Nārāyanbhat replied, ' Send him to me at once; and for one *parīs* I will return him four, so don't concern yourself.' 208. Thus comforting her he began to sing the praises of God with love, and applied his mind to the name and form of God, free from all anxieties about family life. 209. He daily performed the worship of Vishnu, singing the praises of Hari, reading the *Bhāguat*, and contemplating God; in this way two years rolled on when the Brāhman returned. 210. Going to the house of Nārāyanbhat he saw the mistress of the house and said, ' Give back to me the thing I deposited with you. ' 211. The wife replied, ' My husband has gone to bathe in the river; your *parīs* is with him; when he returns ask it of him. ' 212. The Life of the world as he heard this said, ' But I gave *you* the *parīs*: why did you tell *him* the secret needlessly ? 213. I see his action is as pure as white crystal. ' Hearing this speech of the Brāhman the mistress of the house replied, 214. ' A woman is not faithful if she keeps any

secret from her husband; therefore I told him about it and he will soon be coming.' 215. The Brāhman replied, 'My party has gone far ahead, so come along with me to the bank of the Tāpī and return to me my *parīs*.' 216. As the noble Brāhman said this the woman felt concerned and said to herself, 'Things don't look very well.' After saying this she went to the bank of the Tāpī, 217. and found Nārāyanbhat muttering something on a seat in a place all by himself. Then the wife who possessed such a good character addressed him in these tender words: 218. 'The man who left his *parīs* with us has returned to ask for it. How shall I answer him? Here he is. Please look at him.' 219. In his mental worship Nārāyanbhat was bringing into his contemplation *Chakra-pānī* (i. e., Vishnu), and he looked exactly like this Brāhman, at which he felt astonished. 220. As he opened his eyes he saw before him the noble Brāhman who said, 'Give me back the *parīs* at once and cease your contemplation.' 221. As the *bhakta* of Vishnu heard him he replied, 'I threw the *parīs* into the water, as I did not want any hindrances, for because of such things *Bhagwant* (i. e., God) goes away from one.' 222. God then said, 'I have not been freed from desires as you have and without the *parīs* I will not leave.' 223. Seeing his resolve the expert *bhakta* entered the stream of the river, and picking up four stones he came out, 224. and said, 'Pick out from these stones your own.' The Life of the world rubbed each stone on a piece of iron and he found every stone had become a *parīs* (touchstone), and at their touch iron became gold. 225. Then Shri Hari became pleased and threw away at once the garb of a Brāhman and appeared himself before him with His four arms and His divine silk robe. 226. The divine face was beautiful and attractive, and in his ears were the crocodile earrings; the Husband of Rukminī was standing with His feet

parallel, and seeing Him the heart was cooled. 227. Both the husband and the wife prostrated lovingly before Him; with love they worshipped and embraced the Life of the world; 228. seeing with their eyes the *sagun* form of God they stored it up in their hearts. And when God looks upon one with an eye of mercy the snares of this worldly life are at once cut asunder.

229. In the next chapter there is a beautiful story which the Husband of Rukmini will cause me to speak, for by His blessing of assurance Mahipati speaks sacred words. 230. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktalīlāmrit*. By merely listening to it all the longings of the heart are fulfilled. May the pious and loving *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the forty-seventh delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XLVIII

RATNĀKAR, MĀDHAVDĀS OF SURAT,
AND VITTHAL PURANDAR

INFLUENCE OF THE *KALI YUGA*

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. As the *Kali* (i. e., the Evil Age) developed, sins began to increase enormously; then the great *rishis* (sages) became frightened and went to Badrikāshram. 2. Though there were many deities on the earth, yet they had given up performing miracles: they had entered into stone images and therefore suffered spoliation from the Muslims. 3. The great sacred bathing places became mere water and the people were without any means of salvation; then the saints descended as *avatārs* on the earth. 4. They put out the ferry boat of the singing of the praises of God, over the earthly ocean. Merely by hearing these praises the people experienced the *sāyujya* salvation (i. e., final absorption into the deity). 5. For the practices of *yoga* and sacrifices and the muttering of prayers are not means of salvation in the *Kali Yuga*; and people are unable to perform the worship of God in proper ways. 6. Then the noble Vaishnavs came to the earth as *avatārs* and taught the people the way of devotion, and if people will but listen to the stories about them the disease of worldly life will be destroyed. 7. The Husband of Rukmini is pleased if people will listen to the stories of the saints and sing about them; he does not forget them, just as a mother does not forget her infant child.

8. At the close of the last chapter we saw that the Life of the world gave a *paris* (i. e., touchstone) to Nārāyanbhat who was free from all earthly desires and that he threw the *paris* into the water. 9. The Life of the world was

pleased with him after testing him in this way and throwing away the garb of a Brāhman He gave him a vision of Himself.

THE STORY OF RATNĀKAR

10. After this there is a story very interesting and purifying, O pious people; by merely listening to it the minds of the hearers become one with it. 11. In the country of Bāgalān there lived a trader named Ratnākar who though he laboured much could not earn sufficient to cover his family expenses. 12. There was no food in his house to eat, he could not obtain raiment or vessels, he fell into debt for a large amount of money to the people; and he could not get capital to carry on his business. 13. Seeing his family disaster Ratnākar sat to practise austerities, day and night repeating the names of God without food and water. 14. In this way fourteen days passed when God told him in a vision, 'Give up all your business and worship Me alone; 15. if you think of doing any earthly business it will not succeed.' As the Recliner on Shesha said this, Ratnākar came to wakefulness. 16. Returning home he related the news to his wife: 'God gave me a dream that I ought not to practise business any more. 17. Only if I become indifferent to worldly things will the Husband of Rukmini be pleased with me. Such a mighty manifestation He gave me. So what shall I do?' 18. The wife replied, 'If we abandon our business our relatives will jeer at us, for to earn a livelihood by begging is shameful in the public eye.' 19. Hearing this reply of his wife, Ratnākar broke his fast and continued his business but did not get enough to maintain them. 20. There was then a famine in the land and the prices of grain had increased in price, so he went wherever he could obtain cheaper grain. 21. Ratnākar took with him four bullocks but he could

get only one bag full of grain and he returned with it. 22. The *bhakta* of Vishnu all alone drove the bullocks in the forest where God severely tested him ; listen to it, O pious *bhaktas*. 23. In the form of a wild beast, Shri Hari frightened and dispersed his four bullocks; missing their way they roamed all over the wilderness. 24. The bag of grain on the back of one of the bullocks fell down and as Ratnākar was in difficulties he said, ' What shall I do ? 25. I am made miserable on account of my avarice for a family life ; more and more am I put to loss; O Lord of the world, Ocean of Mercy, help me in my adversity.' 26. As the loving *bhakta* said this the tears rolled down his face, when suddenly the Husband of Rukmini arrived in the form of a traveller. 27. He brought back his bullocks and put the bag of grain on one of them, and guiding Ratnākar on the way disappeared at once. 28. As he looked back and did not notice the traveller, he repented in his mind and said, ' I have put to trouble the Lord of Dwārakā (i. e., Krishna).' 29. As soon as he reached home he sent for some Brāhmans and distributed to them all his belongings; 30. his bullocks, bags, saddles, garments, vessels, wealth and grain, all were carried away by the Brāhmans and thus his hindrance was entirely ended. 31. Then he began to worship Shri Hari with pure righteousness and indifference to worldly things and yet maintained himself without begging. 32. He did not fawn upon anyone, for to him a prince and a pauper were just the same; and as he sang the praises of God with love the people listened. 33. As the noble Vaishnav was thus free from all desires, his reputation spread far and wide, many great men began to respect him, and his fame spread widely. 34. Many people came to receive his initiatory *mantra* and to adopt the path of devotion ; even great kings respected him and his fame spread all over the country. 35. Many

people gave the noble Vaishnav much wealth when they saw his freedom from desire; at meal-time a thousand men dined with him and the hungry were given food. 36. At the sight of Ratnākar even the evil-minded repented and he did many miracles by the mercy of Shri Hari. 37. Then the *bhakta* of Vishnu thought to himself he would go and visit the various sacred places, for he knew that there were many *sādhus* and saints, whose mere sight gave salvation to men. 38. With this wish he started for Vārānasi (i. e., Benares), bathed in the Bhāgirathī, and went and prostrated himself before Vishweshwar. 39. From there he visited Gayā and *Prayāg* (Allāhābād) and pleased the Brāhmans by gifts; a thousand men followed him on his pilgrimage and there was a steady cry of 'Victory! Victory!' 40. In his *kīrtans* the servant of Vishnu led many to follow the path of devotion; from there he went on to Kurukshetra where repentance was aroused in him by holy bathing. 41. From there he arrived at Hastanāpur (i. e., Delhi) with bands of singers and banners and musical instruments; and as the instruments sounded sweetly they created love in the hearts of the people. 42. People began to say to one another, 'Ratnākar is the *avatār* of God and to save the world he has come into it.' 43. As they talked thus many men and women came to visit him, and he started a great festival at Hastanāpur (i. e., Delhi). 44. He celebrated the *Janmāshtamī* (i. e., the birthday of Krishna) and installed the image of Shri Vishnu in a state chair, performing before it his *kīrtans*, listening to which the hearts of men were touched. 45. Many daintily cooked foods were prepared and Brāhmans were feasted; a procession of the deity taking place the people said, 'Blessed is this day.' 46. There were banners of cloth of gold and of seven colours, also the eagle-banners and the chief banner and musical instruments; fireworks were let off, and suddenly a wonderful

event took place. 47. The procession passed Amarawas, and as the Muslim king saw it he was very pleased. 48. He placed before God five hundred gold coins, and for their large expenses he fixed annual gifts. 49. Through the favour of Shri Hari all the people there followed the way of devotion, and from there he started for Dwārkā to visit Shri Krishna. 50. As he marched along he sang the praises of God; some offered him something while others did not, but he felt neither joy nor sorrow. 51. In this way he arrived at the town of Bhadoch (i. e., Broach) where there ruled an arrogant Muslim, and as he saw him he was roused to anger, 52. saying, 'He is a Hindu mendicant practising great hypocrisy.' Thereupon he sent him some *meat* on a plate and said, 'Accept this favour please.' 53. The messengers said to Ratnākar, 'The king has sent you some sweetmeats, so please empty the vessel and return it by us.' 54. At this the *bhakta* of Vishnu felt very much concerned and he pleaded with Shri Hari saying, 55. 'Whether hypocrite or free from desires, I call myself Thine; ward off this disaster in some extraordinary way.' Thus did he earnestly plead with love. 56. As soon as the cloth was removed from the plate there were seen Mogarā flowers and all were gratified at the sight, the flowers being distributed to all. 57. Some flowers remained on the plate and they were sent to the king, and when he saw this wonderful event the Muslim repented, 58. saying, 'He is a *bhakta* of Vishnu, who has a direct manifestation of God; I persecuted him for nothing.' Then with love and devotion he went to him and prostrated before him requesting, 'Forgive my fault.' 59. Then he placed at his feet a thousand silver coins and requested him to accept from him the expenses for regularly maintaining a palanquin.' 60. Then he sent a cheque on the Governor of Badodā (Baroda), for when the Life of the world favours one, great disasters

are dispelled. 61. The noble Vaishnav hastened to the town of Dwārkā with the multitude of his followers; there too a wonderful event took place; listen to it with reverence, oh pious *bhaktas*. 62. At the junction of the Gomati with the sea a mountain of sand had accumulated, so the stream was stopped and the water had become impure. 63. The green water of the Gomati had become full of worms and if anyone put it into his mouth it stank badly. 64. Hence the inhabitants of the sacred town were in great anxiety but there was no remedy until they heard of the extraordinary reputation of Ratnākar. 65. The priest requested him, 'You are a *bhakta* of Vishnu and have a direct manifestation of God; please make the stream of the Gomati flow into the sea and your reputation will spread through the universe.' 66. When they put him into this difficult position Ratnākar felt reserved in his mind, and standing in front of the god he pleaded in a loving manner, 67. saying, 'O Lord of Dwārkā, the Chief of the Yādavs, Thou hast created hindrances for me in the world; I do not know about the past or the future, but I only think of Thy feet.' 68. The Husband of Rukminī was pleased at this earnest prayer and said, 'If you will bathe in the Gomati the stream will surely begin to flow.' 69. After this manifestation he felt satisfied at heart and after three hours of the night Ratnākar went to the Gomati to bathe. 70. To see the wonderful sight the inhabitants of the sacred town followed him, for as the noble Vaishnav started bathing all the sacred waters came there, 71. and when the water of the Gomati rose the sand washed away, and on seeing this strange sight the people were astonished. 72. While the loving *bhakta* of God was bathing, the water of the river became clear and the stream flowed on without any interruption; the One dark as a cloud being satisfied at the fruit of His own mercy. 73. Seeing this the inhabitants of the sacred town said,

‘He is an *avatār* of God.’ Then they prostrated themselves before him with sincere devotion, 74. and the servant of Vishnu went into the temple, pleading with Shri Hari thus : ‘Thou Lord of Dwārka, Thou dost everything, and Thou hast granted me success today.’ 75. There he remained over a fortnight and then he returned to his own place, for the Recliner on Shesha lets nothing be lacking to His servants.

THE STORY OF MĀDHAVDĀS OF SURAT

76. In Surat there lived a *bhakta* of Vishnu by name of Mādhavdās who sang the praises of God with love, and thought of the *sagun* image of God. 77. He made no difference between what was his own and that of others, nor did he make any difference between high and low; he behaved equally with all and considered all beings as himself. 78. He looked upon prince and pauper and distressed people as all alike; he looked also on wealth as mere earth; for his mind was always free from desires. 79. He made men to follow the way of devotion by teaching them to observe the eleventh day of the fortnight, the Hari watch-night and the worship of Vishnu, and in this way he started the salvation of the world. 80. Pious people who came to visit him brought sugar along with them and distributed this by handfuls to all as a favour. 81. Whether the sugar which was brought by the people was two pounds, one pound, or half a pound, or half a maund or a full maund, it proved to be sufficient to all, each one receiving a handful. 82. The people who watched this wonderful event felt astonished and said, ‘All the *Siddhīs* (i. e., the accomplishments personified) stand before him like willing slaves with hands joined palm to palm.’ 83. Others observed, ‘He has studied jugglery and through its influence he distributes sugar to all.’ Some said, ‘That is not true; it is God who is his helper.’ 84. In this way

various kinds of people reviled or praised him, but Mādhavdās had neither joy nor sorrow at heart. 85. He said, 'Hari, the Feeder of the world, pervades the whole universe, so why should I be sorrowful for what the people say?' In this way he consoled his mind and was full of love at heart. 86. But amongst these men there was one whose mind was crooked, and he filled an earthen jar with ashes, and covering its mouth he brought it into the temple of Hari. 87. Addressing Mādhavdās he said, 'I have brought sugar in this; you yourself should uncover it, and distribute the sugar to all.' 88. Agreeing to this the *bhakta* of Vishnu first offered it to the god, and then he took out the sugar and distributed it to all; at which the evil-minded person repented. 89. For he told the people with his own lips, 'I filled the pot with ashes but they turned to sugar; this to me is a great wonder.' 90. Then with a repentant heart he prostrated himself before Mādhavdās with love and said, 'Pardon me this wrong and retain me at your feet for ever.' 91. Pleading earnestly in this way he became the disciple of the *svāmī*, relinquished all sense of the worldly life and became devoted to God. 92. The people who had watched this wonderful event reported it to the king of the town, 93. who also was a very bad man; and not believing it he put a snake into an earthen pot and tied its mouth. 94. He then sent a messenger to bring Mādhavdās to the palace and the earthen pot with the snake was placed before him. 95. 'I have great desire to take sugar from you, therefore distribute it with your hand,' said the king. 96. The *bhakta* of Vishnu did not even dream that there was anything cunning about it, so he untied the mouth of the pot when, lo! sugar was visible to the eyes. 97. It was first offered to Shri Hari and then it was distributed by handfuls to all. Seeing this strange sight the prince repented, 98. and the king prostrated himself devotedly before the *bhakta* of

Vishnu whom he worshipped with all the ways of worship, offering him garments and ornaments. 99. Mādhav was seated in a palanquin and was taken to the temple of Vishnu, and the king requested him, 'Please tell me if you have any wish.' 100. On that the *bhakta* of Vishnu replied, 'I do not have any desire at all, for all things are perishable, then what is the good of storing them?' 101. The king seeing Mādhavdās was free from desires, returned to his palace and his reputation spread widely; then from there he started for Dwārkā. 102. But his fate would not leave him, for a large number of pilgrims followed him, and they marched on singing the praises of God with love. 103. As they advanced they saw a forest thickly crowded with tall trees where the Lord of the world showed Himself in the form of a tiger. 104. At the sight of the tiger all the people began to tremble with fear which caused them to become scattered. 105. The loving devotion of Mādhavdās having assured him that only one God pervaded all beings, sustained by this belief the *bhakta* of Vishnu ran towards the tiger. 106. The other pilgrims in terror of their lives had hidden themselves here and there; and the Soul of the world taking advantage of the loneliness performed a miracle. 107. Leaving aside the false garb of the tiger, Shripati manifested Himself with His four arms, His ears showing the divine ear-rings, while the yellow silken garment sent forth rays of light. 108. Mādhavdās now saw the image of Vishnu before him as is described by Vyās in the *Shrī Bhāgwat Purān*. 109. Vanamālī (i. e., Vishnu) clasped him to His lotus breasts, and the latter clasped his lotus feet and they joyfully sat together. 110. His heart could not contain the supreme joy and he asked, 'O Hari, why didst Thou assume the form of a tiger? For on account of that hideous form all the pilgrims were scattered.' 111. God replied, 'I wanted loneliness to meet you, therefore I assumed the

form of a tiger and made the people run away. 112. You are a brave noble Vaishnav, and because you worship Me always with love, I left Dwārkā and met you on the way. 113. Now, oh chief of *bhaktas*, listen to what I say. Go back to your place, for you have no order from me to go to Dwārkā, so obey this order of mine. 114. Seeing your sincere devotion, I manifested myself to you just here on the way. Now go back.' 115. After saying this the Husband of Rukminī became at once invisible, as if He took pleasure in living in His *bhakta*'s heart. 116. The pilgrims who ran here and there on the mountain side for fear of their life, lost the good fortune of the sight of Shri Hari. 117. For the Husband of Rukminī does not give the vision to anyone who leaves the company of a Vaishnav. In their great fear they conversed between themselves 118. saying, 'The tiger has killed Mādhavdās and God has protected us.' Some said, 'If we intend to see him we shall have to welcome death.' 119. Just then Mādhavdās called to the pilgrims saying, 'The tiger has run away, so you can return.' 120. Hearing that, all the people wondered and said, 'How was he saved by it (the tiger)?' Others replied, 'Shri Krishna is his helper; 121. for a snake was put into an earthen jar which he turned to sugar. What can a tiger do to him?' So they talked between themselves. 122. In this way they came to Mādhavdās and the loving *bhakta* told them that it was not the tiger but the One dark as a cloud (i. e., Vishnu). 123. With their hands joined palm to palm the companions said, 'Please tell us of the event in detail.' Hearing that, the expert *bhakta* said, 'It cannot be described. 124. The mother tortoise looks at her young ones out of affection, but if you ask them their experience they cannot describe it. 125. If sugar is given to a child it understands its taste but it cannot express it with its lips; it experiences the thing at heart.

126. The Chātak bird enjoys the drink of the nectar coming from the Moon by which it is satisfied; but if other birds ask its experience, it cannot describe it. 127. In the same way is the glory of the mercy of Shri Hari; only the loving and pious ones can understand it. To-day Shri Hari gave the vision and I alone can experience the joy of it. 128. I have no orders of Shri Hari to proceed to Dwārka. 'Saying this he went on to Surat, 129. and the other pilgrims went to Dwārka and Mādhavdās soon returned home, out of love worshipping God and thinking of the salvation of the world. 130. He made many people follow the path of *bhakti* through the worship of Vishnu and the song-praises of Hari, for the Vaishnavs have descended to the earth just to save the world.

THE STORY OF VITTHAL PURANDAR OF BEDAR

131. There lived in the province of Bedar one Vitthal Purandar who was full of devotion; his life is very wonderful; listen to it, ye pious *bhaktas*. 132. He had both wife and children but was always indifferent to his family affairs, for he worshipped Pāndurang and was absorbed in it. 133. Although carrying on his family affairs he always thought of Vitthal, never told a falsehood, and had compassion for all creatures. 134. If at meal-time a guest came he gave him food according to his ability. His family affairs were very weak (on account of poverty), but he was always righteous in heart. 135. In *Āshādh* (July) and *Kārtik* (November) he went on pilgrimage to Pandhari with a resolve to be a constant pilgrim (to Pandhari). 136. Once in the month of *Kārtik* when the day arrived to go on pilgrimage to Pandharpur just at that time a nine days' fever attacked Vitthal Purandar. 137. Thereby his body became emaciated, and he had no strength to walk, so he began to remember the Lord of Pandhari

and said, 'What shall I do?' 138. He wished that once for all the bundle of his body might fall in Pandharī, so he struggled very much and his body began to burn with the three afflictions. 139. If he lay down he could not sleep, for his thoughts were in Pandharī, saying, 'A great hindrance has come in the way of my pilgrimage to Pandharī on account of my bad actions in my former births' 140. Three days and three nights thus passed in mental conflict, but health he had not and so he made a firm resolve, 141. saying, 'This body is perishable, and if I depend on it the feet of Vithobā will be lost to me, so what is the good of caring for my life?' 142. If I am destined to die I cannot become immortal by sleeping at home, I must leave this place first; then let happen what will.' 143. With this resolve Vitthal Purandar started though there was no one with him, so his wife accompanied him. 144. He had no horse nor any other beast, his fever went on increasing, and walking one step would have endangered his life. 145. Journeying on in this way they covered two stages and at night the wife sat beside her husband looking at him. 146. His body was burning with fever and he could not utter a word, for he was intensely restless and was in a subconscious state. 147. When she saw him in that condition she began to weep bitterly and said, 'The signs are not favourable, for the Husband of Rukmini is angry with us.' 148. Then her husband came to consciousness a little and said to his wife, 'Put me on a cot and give me the sight of the Lord of Pandharī. 149. Find out four labourers and carry me on a cot, for as soon as I see Pandharpur I shall feel better.' 150. As the wife heard her husband she felt anxious, for she had no money, so what could she do? 151. They had not money enough even for the journey, so how were any labourers to be paid? At this thought, anxiety overpowered her. 152. When she could not think

of what to do, she began to plead with Pāndurang, 'Oh Lord of Pandhari, God of gods, help me in my trouble, oh Keshav. 153. Thou art the Brother of the helpless, the Cloud of mercy, and the saints say that by the mere utterance of Thy name Thou dost destroy all hindrances; this saying of theirs will be given a lie (if Thou dost not come to my help). 154. We have left our home far behind and Pandharpur is still four stages away and my husband is burning with fever. What shall I do, oh God ? 155. We are in the state of " Neither here nor there. " Oh Husband of Rukmini, Shri Hari, rush to our help now. For Vitthal Purandar calls himself Thy faithful pilgrim. ' 156. In this way the poor woman wept and pleaded, and hearing her plea *Chakrapānī* (i. e., Vishnu) rushed to her aid. 157. Shri Hari in the garb of a rustic farmer arrived at the place of their halting and said, ' Oh sister, why are you so sad ? Tell me quickly. ' 158. She replied, ' Bāpā, my husband is very sick, and we have journeyed two stages, but we are at a very critical moment, 159. for he is attacked with high fever and cannot walk a single pace. Other pilgrims have gone on far ahead. Tell me what I should do ? ' 160. Hearing her story *Shūrangthar* (i. e., Vishnu) said, ' Pandharpur is my town and I have to go there at once. 161. I have three more companions and we were lying outside; so as soon as I heard you, I came to see what the matter was. 162. We will put your husband on a litter and take him to Pandharpur. Now give up anxiety and quiet your mind. ' 163. As the Mine of mercy thus spoke she felt much relief and said, ' If you will oblige us that much, you will be doing a limitless good action. ' 164. As soon as it was dawn the Life of the world performed a wonder, for He Himself took the forms of the four labourers and arrived with the litter. 165. Vitthal Purandar was placed on it and the Husband

of Rukmini carried him on His shoulders; for the Soul of the world bears on His head all the burdens of His *bhaktas*. 166. Although some practice the *Yoga* in its eight forms, He is not to be seen by them; for the Lord of the world bears the burden of His *bhaktas*; this I consider very wonderful. 167. The Lord of the world is not to be obtained by any sacrifices, austerities or vows; He, the Lord of the helpless and the Brother of the lowly, works personally for the pious. 168. He who is without attributes and without form and whose end is not known to the *Vedas* and the *Shāstras*, He took a *sagun* form and carried the burden of His *bhaktas*. 169. The Creator of the world whose father is Shri Hari. He, the Father of the world in a human form, seated His *bhakta* on His shoulders. 170. Thinking of *Yoga-Māyā*, Shripati performed this wonder, and as the sun was setting he arrived at Pandharpur at one and the same time as the other pilgrims who had gone ahead. 171. There on the banks of the Chandrabhāgā crowds of pilgrims had encamped, saints shouting the names of Vitthal and wagging their heads in His praise-services. 172. Hearing that sound, Vitthal Purandar felt as satisfied at heart as when a life-giving charm falls on the ear of anyone at the point of death. 173. The Vaishnavs, pious and loving, shouted the names of God and bands of singers with banners went in procession. 174. In such a sacred place the Lord of Vaikunth laid down the litter, and gave them poles and small tents and other provisions. 175. Then the Husband of Rukmini went into the temple and brought the holy water in which His feet were washed, and as the water was put into Vitthal Purandar's mouth he felt a little relief. 176. Then both husband and wife were led by the hand by Him into the temple where Hari gave them His vision and put a cocoanut into their hands. 177. When they saw the One dark as a cloud, tears

flowed from their eyes and their throats were choked with emotion, for they embraced the god, holding it tight with both their hands. 178. Placing their heads at the feet of the god they said, 'Through good luck we have seen these feet.' Their joy could not be contained and they felt overcome by their love. 179. They also saw images of Rāhi. Satyabhāmā and Rukminī (the wives of Krishna), and the saints and good men who were performing a *kīrtan*. 180. Then the husband and wife were taken to their lodging and after placing them there the man said, 'I am now going home, but as soon as it is morning I will return.' 181. They asked Him, 'What is your name, tell us quickly; for we don't see anything with which to return your kindness.' 182. On this Vanamālī (i. e., Vishnu) said, 'My name is Pāndurang Koli; my wife and children and other relatives live just in this town.' 183. Vitthal Purandar said to him, 'I come here in the months of *Ashādh* (July) and *Kārtik* (November). Please meet me then and remember me.' 184. At this the Pervader of the Universe replied, 'I am always by your side, but you do not recognise me; 185. whenever you think of me, I will at once come to you.' Having said this, Shri Hari at once went off. 186. The festival lasted for over seven days and on the day of full moon there was the dramatizing (i. e., *Gopāl-kālā*), and the *bhakta* of God (Vitthal Purandar) gained strength and felt well. 187. When husband and wife went into the temple and visited Pāndurang. their eyes were full of tears and taking leave of the god they departed. 188. They also took leave of Pundlik and circumambulated the sacred town, every moment remembering the great kindness of Pāndū Koli. 189. As soon as they thought of Shri Hari He manifested Himself in the same form, and the Sporter of Vaikunth who is the Soul of the world saw them off on their way. 190. Then Vitthal Purandar said to him, 'Please see me

in the month of *Āshādh*. 'Surely,' replied *Hrishīkeshī* (i. e., Krishna), 'but do come to Pandharī.' 191. After saying this He returned to the temple. He becomes subservient to His *bhaktas* and shows wonders in various ways. 192. Then Vitthal Purandar with his wife returned home, but in his contemplation and in his mind there was nothing but Shri Hari and he thought of Pandharī every moment. 193. He worshipped the Lord of Pandhari even as he ate, drank, walked, slept, sat, rested or carried out his family affairs. 194. As he thought of Vitthal with love the inclinations of his mind became absorbed in Him, and again in the month of *Āshādh* (July) he went to Pandharī with joy. 195. As they came into Pandharī they both sought for Pāndurang Koli; they searched for him all over the place but he could not be seen. 196. (Vitthal Purandar) said, 'He is the friend of my life, for he carried me on his shoulders; he must have left Pandharī and gone away; therefore he is not to be seen.' 197. Both husband and wife searched for him all over the sacred town, but even till sunset he could not be found. 198. Three hours of the night had passed and both of them were still without food. At this the Lord of Pandharī found Himself in trouble and said, 'I must give them the vision now.' 199. Then taking a *saṅga* form He gave them the vision and said, 'I am the Pāndurang Koli who carried you on my shoulders.' 200. As soon as they saw once more the Giver of salvation they felt intense joy; then they embraced the god and with their hands clasped his feet. 201. Vitthal Purandar said to the god, 'The body which you carried on your shoulders is perishable; tell me some means by which I should repay your great kindness.' 202. On this Pāndurang replied, 'If you forsake the perishable one, how will you gain the imperishable one? Explain this to me. 203. Through body, speech and mind you were

absorbed in me ; therefore, do the cooking and dine at once. 204. For Pandharī is the home of *sādhus* and saints, and there is no such thing as fasting in this sacred place.' Saying this, Shri Hari returned to the temple. 205. For God adapts Himself to the inclination which one may have ; and He shows extraordinary wonders in the difficult moments of His *bhaktas*. 206. Hari gives the vision to any who do not swerve from true living, although their body may be in trouble, but He is not seen by the eyes of others. 207. When Duryodhan persecuted the Pāndavs they had to go into exile, but they did not give up righteousness and they remembered the Lord Krishna at heart. 208. The Brāhman Sudāmā was stricken with poverty but he remembered the feet of Shri Hari, and therefore his poverty was destroyed. 209. When the father of Pralhād persecuted him his worship was not impeded, but *Shārangdhar* (i. e., Vishnu) saw His resolve and manifested Himself in the pillar. 210. Let us stop talking too much about this. The point is that Purandar started on a pilgrimage although his body was burning with fever and so the Husband of Rukminī gave him the vision.

211. In the next chapter there is an intensely interesting story ; may listeners pay attention to it, and may good people accept the uncouth words of Mahipati. 212. *Svasti* (Peace) ! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmrit*, and by merely listening to it the heart's purposes are fulfilled. May the pious and loving *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the forty-eighth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XLIX

NARASINHA SARASWATĪ ; A. WASHHERMAN KING ;
AND MAHĀMUDGALBHAT

INVOCATION

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. The dark complexioned one, the infinite and illimitable, His sports are without number ; multitudes of universes are contained in all the pores of His body. 2. The moon and the sun are His two eyes ; the Soul of the world is larger than twenty-one heavens and seven netherlands. 3. An infant child was born of the sound of the three *Vedas* and he created the moveable and the immoveable creation, but even he does not know the limit of Shri Hari. 4. If the *bhuktas* try to contemplate this prodigious form of God, they cannot do so ; therefore the Giver of salvation is standing at Pandhari in the *sagun* form. 5. The form is lovely and tender ; His feet are parallel on the brick ; both His hands look beautiful on His hips ; and His face is charming. 6. As soon as He sees the pious and the loving He at once meets them ; around His neck shine garlands of *tulsi* leaves, and His sight is pointed to the tip of His nose. 7. Pundlik did a great kindness, inasmuch as he brought God to the mortal world ; he was given the name of Vitthal and therefore the salvation of the world became easy. 8. In the last chapter there was the delightful story about Vitthal Purandar whom God carried on His shoulders to Pandharpur.

THE STORY OF NARASINHA SARASWATĪ

9. Narasinha Saraswati was a great saint in whom the portion of Dattātraya, who descended to the earth in a human form, became incarnate to save the world. 10. It was from a learned Brāhman who was without a son

that the son of Atri (i. e., Dattātraya) was born on account of some good deeds done in his former birth. 11. As the Brāhman saw the face of his son he was very much satisfied in mind and the mother was pleased by his beautiful form and character. 12. After twelve days he was given the name of Narasinha, and at the fifth year he was installed with the sacred thread and his study of the *Vedas* began. 13. By looking at the book only once he could commit it to memory, at which the Brāhmans very much wondered and said that he must be greatly talented. 14. Some said, ' The son of Angirā (Jupiter) came in him to act voluntarily in his *sagun* form. ' Others said, ' To us he appears to be Dvaipāyan (i. e., Vyās) himself. ' 15. No Brāhman could be compared to him, for on the tip of his tongue Saraswatī (i. e., the goddess of learning) presided and therefore the same name was given to him, 16. and among the public he was known by the name of Narasinha Saraswatī. At seeing the talents of his son the father was pleased at heart, 17. and when he was eight years old he became expert in the *Vedas* and philosophy ; he had learned by heart all the *Purāns* and he appeared to be a second sun in the form of a Brāhman. 18. But he did not care for his parents, for he was continually in an unconscious condition, and he sat worshipping God all alone in a forest. 19. He did not laugh nor did he speak in jest with anyone; he did not mind hunger or thirst, for he was free from all objects of sense. 20. When these signs were vividly seen in him, both his parents felt deeply concerned and said, ' We received a son after many vows but he is in a state of bodily unconsciousness; 21. for he goes into a forest and sits in loneliness day and night; how shall we marry him ? His state is not inclined towards it. 22. It was after a great many vows that God gave us this son, but his way of life is quite in

opposition to the world; what shall we do ?' 23. One day the father said to him, 'You sit by yourself and you do not mind the family affairs.' 24. The son replied, 'The word family life is in itself without meaning. How can there be any horoscope for the son of a barren woman ?' 25. It is like the ocean seen in a mirage on which plough ships stored with fortunes seen in a dream. 26. In the same way the word *Samsār* (or worldly affairs) is false, so why do you give any value to it ? Think of your own soul and then will your life be a success.' 27. In this way Narasinha Saraswatī spoke in reply to his father ; but the latter did not like it, for on account of this bodily affection he was in a dilemma. 28. If a mirror is shown to a blind man he cannot see his face there. And how can a deaf person enjoy the pleasure of singing ? 29. In the same way the snares of *Māyā* blind the eyes of one who is always engaged in his family affairs, so he does not give attention to the way of salvation. 30. Seeing this state of his, the son said to the father, 'Now kindly permit me to go to *Vārūnasī* (i. e., Benares).' 31. Hearing these words of his son the father's eyes filled with tears and he said, 'Without you we have no other child, then why do you forsake us ?' 32. Had we another son we could have permitted you. We are now old and how shall we carry on our family affairs ?' 33. Hearing his father's answer the chief of the *yoṅis* said in return, ' You will have two more sons, so don't be anxious ; 34. besides these you will have a daughter of a very good character, good natured and altogether pure and she will save the family, consider these words of mine as true.' 35. Giving this boon he bowed to his parents and then went off to *Vārūnasī* (i. e., Benares) and became a *Saṁnyāsī* with the name of Shripād. 36. Giving up his staff and gourd he at once took the

order of a *Paramahansa*,* and the inhabitants of the sacred town seeing his great talent revered him. 37. At the very sight of him many worldly men took to the path of devotion, the people behaved with divine fortune (i. e., godly qualities) and were full of righteousness. 38. He had three hundred disciples who were indifferent to worldly things and very knowing, he stayed there for a year and his reputation grew far and wide. 39. Therefore he was sick of it and returned to his own country; and whoever supplicated him with sincere devotion he made him his disciple. 40. In this way he had many followers, the number amounting to seven hundred, and taking them with him he returned to his own country. 41. His reputation spread far and wide and from a great distance people came to visit him; he made many people follow the path of devotion, and they became the very image of holiness. 42. All the eight *Siddhīs* (i. e., accomplishments personified) became his slaves and they gave him everything he wished; even if a poor person invited him to go for alms to his place he satisfied his wish. 43. Journeying along in this way he arrived at Gānagāpur and stayed with all his disciples. 44. Here is a junction of the Amarajā and the Gangā (i. e., Bhīmā) and on their banks he bathed; from afar many people came to visit him and his reputation grew wonderfully. 45. Then the earth-gods (i. e., the Brāhmans) among whom were great learned men well-versed in the study of the *Vedās*, as they heard the reputation of the *Swāmī*, they began to revile him. 46. Said they, 'Without going through the stage of family life, how did he take the order of a *Sannyāsi*? He has given up his staff and instead of living away from the public he wanders among men unclad. 47. Although he has forsaken all religious rites, still he

requires a large supply of food.' Thus did the earth-gods gather together and consider asking him about his way of living. 48. Five hundred Brāhmans started to persecute the *Swāmī* and just then God did a miracle. A great hurricane began to blow furiously, 49. and the dust arose in the sky; no one was in a conscious state; all their clothes were blown away.* 50. The whole of the five hundred Brāhmans as they looked at one another felt ashamed; 51. old and young alike covered themselves with their hands, no one laughed, for all were in the same condition! 52. Seeing this wonderful event, all repented and said, 'We reviled the *Swāmī* and this is the result of it. 53. If we return home the inhabitants of our sacred town will laugh at us and ask us awkward questions; then what shall we tell them? 54. The way of fate is very wonderful, for we have become an object of shame before the public.' Some said, 'Now let us give up all sense of pride and supplicate the *Swāmī*. 55. Arriving at the place where Narasinha Saraswatī was, they began to praise him with great and sincere devotion at heart. 56. 'Victory, victory to you, the image of the supreme Brahman! In relating your fame the *Vedas* became weary. 57. At noon time if one spits at the sun, the spit falls on his head, such has been our condition. Kindly forgive us our fault.' 58. Hearing this earnest plea of the Brāhmans, compassion arose in the heart of the *Swāmī*, and he ordered the *Siddhis* (i.e., the accomplishments personified) to give them all new clothes. 59. Seeing this miracle, all the Brāhmans prostrated themselves before him and then taking leave of the *Swāmī* they returned to their respective places. 60. After that the earth-gods did not hate him at all and still another wonderful event took place; listen to it with reverence,

Verses 49-53 are paraphrased not translated.

oh pious ones. 61. Without the knowledge of his disciples, the *Swāmī* went to the bank of the Amarajā river and finding a lonely place there he entered the water to bathe. 62. He dipped into the water and four *ghutikās* rolled on. This a fisherman had watched and felt astonished. 63. Said he, 'The *Swāmī* has been in the water for a long time; can he have been swallowed up by a crocodile?' So he entered the water and there saw a wonderful sight. 64. As he opened his eyes in the water he beheld seven water deities there and a divine temple the sight of which dazzled his eyes. 65. They (the water deities) took the *Swāmī* to their home and worshipped him fully; standing outside, the fisherman could follow everything with his own eyes. 66. After the worship was finished the *Swāmī* was given daintily cooked foods, and receiving from them the *vidū* (i. e., betel-nut leaves) for cleaning the mouth, the *Swāmī* took leave of them and started to return. 67. As he came out of the temple he saw the fisherman who on being asked what he had seen related everything. 68. Then the *Swāmī* warned the fisherman not to tell anyone of the wonderful sight which he had seen, and showed him a store of fortune. 69. He was given a large pot full of gold coins; and then he came out of the water but no one knew anything about this. 70. The fisherman became wealthy but the secret of it he could not keep for he told the people, 'The *Swāmī* being pleased with me has destroyed my pain and poverty.' 71. There was one poor Brāhman who was miserably stricken with the pain of poverty; his family could get no food to eat but he possessed a great courage. 72. He approached the *Swāmī* and placed his head on his feet; then with hands joined palm to palm he said in nectar words, 73. 'Please favour this humble one, and come to my house to dine.' The *Swāmī* replied, 'I will come when it is convenient to me.' 74. Hearing this assuring word the Brāhman returned

home and related to his wife the acceptance by the *Swāmī* of his invitation; 75. but he added, 'He has not fixed any day or date.' One day, however, at the time of offering food to fire, the bodily unconscious one (i. e., the *Swāmī*) suddenly arrived. 76. As soon as the Brāhman saw him he was greatly pleased, and made him a low bow, and gave him a seat to sit down. 77. He had that day in his house kernels cooked and watermixed with tamarinds, so he was sorry at heart and did not know what to do. 78. Said he to himself, ' If I had had previous knowledge of his coming, I would have procured some other things.' Neither husband nor wife had their minds entirely free, so the bodily unconscious one said to them, 79. ' I have a mind to eat cooked kernels with milk; and you have a buffalo in the yard; milk her and bring me the milk.' 80. The Brāhman then said, ' O chief of the *yogīs*, the buffalo has been barren for twelve years and is never pregnant.' 81. The *Swāmī* replied, ' From today she will give milk and will never go dry again as long as she lives. Let this be your firm belief.' 82. When the Brāhman went to milk her she gave eight seers of milk, and even the earth-god was very much astonished saying, ' He is God Himself. ' 83. Then Narasinha Saraswatī sat down to dine and ate the kernels with milk, after which a leaf of *tulsī* was given him to clean his mouth. Then the *Swāmī* thus ordered the Brāhman, 84. ' Tomorrow when I come here for alms I shall have seven hundred disciples, so please invite all the Brāhman inhabitants of this sacred town. 85. If you will cook dainty food for twenty-five men only, that will suffice for all; have no anxiety about it. ' 86. After saying this he departed and the next day the Brāhman gave an invitation in every house. 87. The Brāhmans began to wonder and said, ' In his house there is no food to eat; is he playing a child's trick on us to-day ? We surely

do not know.' 88. Well, different people talked about the matter in their own various ways and as soon as it was noon crowds of men gathered at the house. 89. The *Swāmī* also arrived with his seven hundred disciples and there were also five hundred Brāhmans of the town, yet food was served to all. 90. The food which had been cooked for only twenty-five men sufficed for all of them. So all the Brāhmans said, 'This is indeed the doing of the *Swāmī*.' 91. As the Brāhmans finished dining and got up they were all given rolled betel-nut leaves and gifts of money, and they said, 'This is the unfathomable sport of the chief of the *yogīs*; it is he who has showed us this miracle.' 92. Then the food that was left over was distributed to other castes. In this way the poor Brāhman's poverty was destroyed and he became wealthy.

A WASHERMAN BECOMES KING OF VIJĀPUR

93. In the same town there was a washerman who every day went to visit the *Swāmī*; he brought into his mind the form of the *Swāmī* and worshipped it. 94. After many days the idea came into his head that he should possess the kingdom of Vijāpur, 95. and as soon as he had this idea the *Swāmī* manifested himself to him and said, 'Tell me whatever wish is in your mind at this time. 96. I know the idea in your mind, so do not have any reserve, but explain your wish to me at once.' 97. The washerman replied, 'I have a wish that I should be the ruler of Vijāpur, but how shall I realize such a wish?' 98. Then *Avadhūt* (i. e., the ascetic, Narasinha Saraswatī) was pleased with him and said, 'I will fulfil your desire just now.' Then the washerman again requested, 'My body is decrepit, 99. for I am old, so how shall I be able to enjoy any sensual objects? So fulfil my wish in my next birth.' In this way he pleaded. 100. And the

Swāmī replied, 'Your wishes shall be fulfilled, and whenever you remember me, I will grant you a vision.' 101. After saying this, the *Swāmī* vanished out of sight and the washerman died then and there, and was freed from his body. 102. He then took birth as the son of the Muslim king of Vijāpur who became very pleased. 103. Every day there were great festivals and he gradually grew up until at the age of sixteen he sat on the royal throne. 104. But he was engrossed in sensual objects and did not remember the *Swāmī*, therefore his feet suddenly had some disease. 105. He tried many physicians in order to cure it; but the disease did not pass away and so he felt much concerned. 106. One day as the king was sleeping he remembered in his dream the events of his former birth in detail. 107. As he thought of the *Swāmī* the latter at once gave him a vision and said, 'Tomorrow a *Paramahansa* will come to you and he will cure your disease.' 108. As he woke up, the king related to his minister what he had seen in his dream and told him to honour the guest who might come the next day. 109. The next day at noon the *Swāmī* arrived there and as the king placed his head on his feet all his disease disappeared. 110. Then the *Avadhūt* (i. e., the ascetic) gave him some moral instruction: 'Do not be intoxicated through the pride of being a king; do not harass the humble, the lowly and the helpless; 111. protect the cows and the Brāhmins for ever; rigorously punish all rogues and the evil-minded; then only will this worldly life be fruitful; 112. remember with love Shri Hari day and night; supplicate the *bhaktas* of Vishnu, the Brāhmins and the guests who come at the noon meal-time.' 113. As the *Siddhamūrti* (or superman) said this the king replied, 'Surely; now tell me some rule to be observed until I see you next.' 114. The *Avadhūt* then said, 'Go to Kāshī (Benares) and there you will have a vision of me; let

this be your firm belief.' 115. After saying this to him the *Swāmī* disappeared, and the king with a repentant heart started on pilgrimage. 116. He went to *Anandwana* (i. e., Benares), and bathed in the *Bhāgīrathī* and as soon as he remembered the *Swāmī* he had a vision of him. 117. Then the *Swāmī* ordered him, 'Live at *Kāshī* (Benares) for four months; I am going to the banks of the *Amarajā* river, so come and visit me there. 118. Install my footprints here and always worship them.' Saying this to him, he disappeared. 119. The king stayed there for four months as he was ordered by the *Swāmī* and then came to *Gānagāpur* on the banks of *Amarajā*. 120. There he visited the *Swāmī* and then returned to his own place and by his justice he became worthy of his royal dignity. 121. In his former birth he had visited many saints and that fruit he now obtained in becoming a king. 122. The *Swāmī* was now at *Gānagāpur* and said to his disciples, 'From now on you may not obtain a vision of me and so hear the best means of doing so. 123. Install my footprints here and worship them every day'; saying this he disappeared. 124. On the banks of the *Krishnā* river there is a town by name of *Kurundwād* where he appeared in order to show some strange events. 125. To see the saint men and women came to visit him and if vows were made to him they were fulfilled.

126. For example, there was a woman who made a vow in her mind that if she could have a son she would take him to the *Swāmī*. 127. When she received a son with good qualities, a great festival was performed in the house and a wonderful event took place. 128. But after six months the child died and the mother took up the dead body and said, 'I will show it to the *Swāmī*.' 129. As soon as the body was brought before the *Swāmī* it suddenly

came to life, so the mother felt joy at heart and made a humble bow to the *Avadhūt*.

130. There was also a rich person who died suddenly and his wife started to cremate herself along with him, casting aside every sense of affection (for those who survived). 131. She went in a procession to the banks of the Krishnā river where the *Swāmī* was seen from a distance. Approaching him she devotedly made him a low bow when he uttered words of blessing. 132. The chaste woman said to the *Avadhūt*, 'My husband is dead and discarding all sense of affection (for others) I am going to burn myself along with him. 133. You have given me a blessing that I shall be a mother of eight sons and the wife of a husband living.' The *Swāmī* became pleased and said, 'Your husband will surely come to life;' 134. and as soon as he came to the dead body the husband sat up, so that the *Swāmī*'s words of blessing easily came true. 135. The *Avadhūt* (i. e., ascetic) made the people on the banks of the Krishnā river follow the path of devotion, then he disappeared from there and no one had a vision of him. 136. In order to save the world he had taken a *sagun* (human) form; such is the glory of the saints and the ignorant do not understand it.

THE STORY OF MAHĀ MUDGALBHAT

137. Listen with reverence to another life, that of the Brāhman Mahā Mudgalbhat. He was expert in the study of the *Vedas* and the *Shāstras* and he was free from pride. 138. If a great learned Brāhman came to him he became dumb before him; for though he had such mighty learning he wasted no time in useless debate. 139. He had compassion for all creatures and looked on the whole world as himself, he told no untruths and his mind was absorbed in the contemplation of God. 140. He favoured no one but looked on prince and pauper alike and his

mind was never entangled in the meshes of desire; for he was entirely free from all worldly desires. 141. He regularly performed all his ablutions and prayers and offered the five household sacrifices; if a guest arrived at the noon meal-time he worshipped him with devotion. 142. In his house he had ancient images of Shri Rāma, Sitā, Lakshman, Bharata and Shatrughna and devotedly worshipped them. 143. In his mind, in his contemplation and in the state both of wakefulness and of dream he saw Shri Rāma who pervaded the whole animate and inanimate creation and the three worlds. 144. He looked on his son, friends and wife as Shri Rāma who was the mover of all his limbs; such was his state, a state of complete understanding. 145. The clothing and food he got without begging was enough for the protection of his family, and his mind was always content. 146. At the time of the Shri Rāma Jayanti (the birth festival of Rāma) he had a great festival at his house and for ten days he satisfied the hungry with food and gave daintily cooked food to the Brāhmans. 147. Mudgalbhat was an honoured Brāhman, therefore the pious people obtained provisions, and the saints and *mahants* and noble Vaishnavs performed the song services. 148. On the tenth day there was the dramatizing and then the *bhaktas* of Vishnu received gifts. In this way many days passed when a wonderful event took place. 149. He once started with his family on the great pilgrimage (to Benares), leaving one son at home to worship the household deities. 150. With his wife, his other sons and daughters-in-law and horses and menials, Mudgalbhat went to Benares and there bathed in the Bhāgirathi. 151. He worshipped the *Jyotirlinga** of Vishweshwar (at Kāshi or Benares); then doing all

* See *Stories of Indian Saints*, II, Vol. 10 in this Series, pp. 442 and 260.

the pilgrimages he felt satisfied. 152. In order to reach home by the time of *Rāma-Navamī* (Rama's birth festival) he started at once, on his way visiting Gayā, Prayāg (i. e., Allāhābād) and Ayodhyā and felt satisfied at heart. 153. He bathed at Gayā and performed there the *Shrāddha* ceremony (in memory of ancestors); and worshipped the deities there according to proper rites; whatever was usually done in every sacred place he did. 154. Completing his pilgrimage the *bhakta* of Vishnu returned and on the way a knowing gentleman requested him with great reverence to stay at his house, 155. exclaiming, ' By my good luck this Vishnu *bhakta* has come here.' Saying this he worshipped him as required by the rites and offered him clothes and ornaments. 156: As he had to perform the festival of *Rāma-Jayantī*, he was given money which Mudgalbhat accepted and afterwards continued on his way. 157. There were many other pious and loving men who offered him money equal to the leaf to *tulsi* (i. e., the smallest possible gift) and in this way he came to possess a large sum of money. The robbers came to know of it, 158. and as Mudgalbhat was on his way the robbers followed him. They said to themselves, 'We will catch him in the forest and rob him of his wealth.' 159. With this evil plan in mind the thieves followed him but the expert *bhakta* was ignorant of it, only the soul-pervading Raghuvira (i. e., Rāma) knowing of it. 160. But Mudgalbhat's state of mind was such that he looked on thieves and all others alike and he had no idea of protecting his wealth. 161. Some gave and some did not, some reviled and some praised; but he looked on both equally, and with love he held Raghupati (i. e., Rāma) in his heart. 162. He had discarded all anger and desire and in his heart he had stored the dark-complexioned one and on his mind he had impressed a love for God only, so that he saw Rāma everywhere. 163. Such was the mental condition of

Mudgalbhat, but the robbers were very cruel and evil-minded, and they purposed killing him and carrying away his fortune. 164. So they followed him with arms and knowing this, *Shrī Raghuvīr* (i e., Rāma) assumed a form with attributes. 165. Whenever a *bhakta* is in difficulty the Recliner on Shesha (i e., Vishnu) does not think about any favourable or unfavourable time but at once takes a human form and overcomes all the difficulties. 166. *Shrī Rāma*, Lakshman, Bharata and Shatrughna appeared as four archers on the way, 167. and while the loving *bhakta* of God marched on with his family singing the praises of God, the four archers protected him, and the robbers walked on very cautiously. 168. Bharata and Shatrughna walked ahead with bows and arrows, and Rāma and Lakshman brought up the rear protecting their *bhakta* with love. 169. To the robbers these four appeared very fierce, for they were full of inward rage and looked at the robbers with wide bloodshot eyes. 170. Seeing such terror-striking forms, fear arose in the minds of the robbers and they began to say among themselves, 'Why are they closely following us? 171. If they would remain at a distance, either before or behind, we could rob him (Mudgalbhat) of all his money ; but they do not leave him for a moment but protect him day and night.' 172. If the noble Vaishnav slept they wakefully kept watch for twelve hours, so the robbers wondered at heart and did not know what to do. 173. One day the robbers asked the archers, 'Where are you going to ?' Hearing this question Raghuvīr (i e., Rāma) replied, 174. ' Mudgalbhat is performing the great pilgrimage, and we are in his service, so we shall see him safe as far as his house and then we shall return to Ayodhyā.' 175. Although *Shrī Raghuvīr* said this, still the robbers did not recognize him, for the inner soul of all beings, the Saviour of the world, calls himself the servant

of each *bhakta*. 176. He whose image Dhūrjati (i. e., Shiva) worships in loneliness, He, the Lord of the world, becomes a servant of His *bhaktas*; this I consider very wonderful. 177. 'Today or tomorrow these may leave him at a distance, and then we will immediately rob him of his money;' with this hope the robbers walked as far as the banks of the Gangā river (i. e., the Godāvarī). 178. There Mudgalbhat entered his house and the saddle was removed and taken into the house. Then the four archers disappeared seeing which the robbers were astonished. 179. The sun had set and so the robbers remained outside the house, and the pious people of the town came to visit Mudgalbhat. 180. 'Did you perform the pilgrimage safely?' they all asked. 'Yes, through the favour of Shri Raghuvīra (i. e., Rāma),' was the reply, and hearing this the robbers naturally repented. 181. They said between themselves, 'Was it God who protected him because he is a *bhakta* of Vishnu? We tried various methods but we could not steal his wealth.' 182. Mudgalbhat at once went into the god-house, and seeing the beautiful image there he prostrated himself before it in sincere devotion. 183. As he intended to take some repast he saw the robbers at the door and said to them, 'We came in each other's company thus far, therefore come and do honour to my poor food.' 184. Saying this he had food given them from the house, and as soon as they ate it the effect on them was that all their evil-mindedness disappeared. 185. Prostrating themselves before Mudgalbhat they all said, 'In your service there were four men, how is it that we do not see their forms here? 186. They were very beautiful to look at and they had bows and arrows in their hands with which they protected you day and night; why are they not seen here?' 187. Mudgalbhat replied, 'I engaged no servants. Who are you? Please tell me quickly.

188. They replied, 'We are all robbers and we watched and followed you from a long distance with the intention of robbing you, but those four men protected you; 189. once when we asked them where they were going, they simply said they were your servants, and that they were inhabitants of Ayodhyā; 190. and we saw them with you here until you entered your house.' Hearing the story of the robbers, he (Mudgalbhat) said, 'I have put to much trouble the Giver of salvation.' 191. Then Mudgalbhat fell at the feet of the robbers saying, 'You have met with the Recliner on Shesha and your fortune has no limit.' 192. You are true *bhaktas* of Vishnu, therefore Raghunāth (Rāma) met you. But I am a fallen one; this is thrice true and therefore He hid Himself from me.' 193. Then with his own hands he gave the thieves the bundles of money and requested them, 'Do not return home empty-handed; accept this, oh *swāmīs*; 194. for the dear Shri Rāma, Lakshman, Bharata, and Shatrughna gave you the vision of themselves in the form of archers.' 195. Hearing these words the thieves repented and said, 'We are sinful and evil-minded, but your company has saved us; 196. had we persecuted any other person, we would have had to undergo the agonies of hell, but on account of your company we were able to see the Husband of Jānakī; 197. we do not want your money; for we have been purified by your company.' Then Mudgalbhat closed his eyes and began to sing the praises of Rāma. 198. 'Victory, victory to Thee, oh Raghuvīr, the Giver of *sāyujya* salvation (i.e., absorption in God) and very generous. Oh Thou who art so dear to the blue-throated Shankar (Shiva), come and quickly show me Thyself. 199. With bows and arrows in Thy hands, Thou didst show Thyself every day to the thieves; but what perverse fate have I in store? Tell me, oh Husband of Jānakī.'

200. Then with love he composed in Sanskrit a hundred verses in the Āryā metre full of solemn sentiment and the Giver of salvation met him. 201. Shri Rāma, Sitā, Lakshman, Bharata, and Shatrughna manifested themselves in the god-house and showed themselves to him. 202. Then he stored up in his heart the *sagun* forms which he saw ; for the Lord of the world helps each *bhakta* in his difficulty on the spot. 203. At the time of the Shri Rāma Jayantī (Rāma's birthday festival) many saints and *mahants* came to his house where a great festival was held and the auspicious musical instruments were sounded. 204. Every day the Brāhmans were fed at his house and at night there was the praise-service of Hari. Once it happened that all the oil was consumed at night, and in no way could any more be procured. 205. If anyone went to buy it in the market, there was great fear of the officials, and if men and women moved about at night, then the watchmen apprehended them. 206. Those who went to the *kīrtan*, stayed there during all the four watches of the night (i. e., 12 hours) and went to their houses when it was day. 207. This being the state of things, there was lack of oil just when the *kīrtan* was going on ; so the Recliner on Shesha was in difficulty and then He performed a wonder. 208. The Husband of Sitā took the form of a disciple of Mudgalbhat, and going to the house of an oilman, he pawned His finger-ring there. 209. Then he told the wife of the oilman, 'Tom orrow bring back the ring and take away your money.' 210. So *Shārangdhar* (i. e., Vishnu) bought a pitcherful of oil and poured it in the pots, and the Saviour of the lowly listened to the *kīrtan*. 211. The *Haridās* stood throughout the service of the *kīrtan*, and the whole audience were awake for four watches of the night ; after which the auspicious lights were waved over the Husband of Sitā. 212. Sweet-meats were also distributed as favours among all the

listeners, and when the people had dispersed and had gone to their houses the sun rose. 213. Then the oilwoman came with the ring and said to Mudgalbhat, 'At night your disciple pawned with me his ring. 214. And bought a pitcher of oil; so give me my money please.' As he heard her he was astonished. 215. And when the disciple was asked he said he knew nothing about it; he could see the oil in the house, and so was astonished. 216. Then Mudgalbhat understood in his mind that it was the doing of Shri Rāma, so he put the ring in the state chair of gods and worshipped it with love.

217. The next chapter is full of strange interest and the Husband of Rukminī will cause me to write it. Mahīpati is His badge-bearer and the suppliant of the saints. 218. *Swasti* (Peace) ! This book is the *Shri Bhaktalīlāmrit*. By merely listening to it the desires of one's mind are fulfilled. May the pious *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the forty-ninth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER L

JANJASWANT, NIRANJAN SWĀMĪ,
AND JAYRĀM SWĀMĪ

INVOCATION

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Victory to Thee, Brother of the lowly, Lord of Pandhari. Oh Vishnu, Thy *māyā* is irresistible, but Thy mere name destroys it and Thou dost shield us with Thy mercy. 2. A seeker after spiritual riches who does not supplicate Thee wholly and solely, may try any number of means of salvation but they will become so many bonds if he does not remember Thee, O Pāndurang. 3. Let there be a man very sinful and stupid, but if by chance he utters Thy name, Thou dost help him to become devoted to Thyself and dost make him the possessor of salvation. 4. Seeing Thy glory, even Indirā (i. e., Vishnu's wife, the goddess of wealth) felt shy in her mind, and therefore she has remained at Thy feet, contemplating Thy form for ever. 5. O God, the serpent Shesha was wearied in describing Thy greatness, and the lotus-born (i. e., Brahmadev) became bewitched; then of what account are we mere human beings? 6. Shankar (i. e., Shiva) greatly longed to obtain Thee, oh Lord of the world, and as he uttered Thy name, Dhūrjati (i. e., Shiva) became quiet at heart. 7. Although the *yogis* practise the eight-fold *yoga*, Thou dost not show them Thyself soon, yet with Thy both hands on Thy hips Thou art standing on the banks of the Bhīmā, 8. to give vision to the simple minded and the ignorant, for Pundlik got from Thee the blessing by which the world is saved. 9. Oh Husband of Rukminī, Thou dost cause me to describe the fame of Thy *bhaktas*, otherwise I am dull; my mind gives evidence of this. 10. It was in reliance on Thy support that I commenced

the writing of the book and now have the honour of carrying it to completion.

11. In the last chapter the story of the righteous Brāhman Mahā Mudgalbhat is related of how he was followed by thieves and how Shri Rāma and Lakshman protected him.

THE STORY OF JANJASWANT

12. Oh good people, listen to the story of the great *Bhakta* of Vishnu by name of Janjaswant, for through his devotion Shri Raghunandan (i. e., Rāma) became subject to him. 13. On the banks of the Tāpī river there is a sacred town called Baret where this noble Vaishnav lived and worshipped God. 14. He was a Brāhman of the Mādhyandina branch, was very righteous and an image of good deeds, uttering the name of God day and night with love. 15. Although he was a householder he was free from the bonds of desire and he was always indifferent to worldly things. Free from all attachments he devoted himself to the worship of the image of God that possessed attributes. 16. Freedom from pride and other characteristics were vividly seen in him and he always worshipped the images of Shri Rāma, Sitā and Lakshman. 17. Maintaining his family without begging, he was content with whatever clothing and food he obtained and always welcomed a guest at the time of the noonday meal. 18. He had compassion for all creatures and was given lovingly to the worship of God, his tongue never being sullied by an untruth. 19. At night he used to perform the song-service of Hari when pious people came and listened with love. 20. The saints have descended to the earth as *avatārs* to save the world, otherwise they are without any form and without any other changes caused by the three *Gunas* (*salva*, *raja* and *tama*). * 21. Just as pure

* See Appendix on these words.

intelligence is the soul of the world, so are His servants, but in order to save the sinful they have taken human forms. 22. There is no difference between the saints and God except in name, just as there are two different names for the sun and its rays; but they are without any difference. 23. Shripati longed in his mind to see His own state, to extol His own fame and to worship Himself; 24. therefore God Himself took the form of *bhaktas* without number; He sang of His own fame and as soon as the dull-minded hear it they become emancipated, even while in the body. 25. Now let us follow the thread of our narrative concerning the pious Brāhman named Janjaswant who daily performed a *Harikīrtan* and sang in praises the power of *sagun* devotion. 26. The pious *bhaktas* of the town, including the Brāhmins, women and *Shūdras*, used to come at night and listen to the *Harikīrtan* with a concentrated mind. 27. In the daytime they looked after their family affairs and at night listened to the stories of Hari, thereby forgetting the temptations of the world and their heart getting rest. 28. In this way many days rolled on when a wonderful event took place. There was an unremitting rain for seven days and nights; 29. by this means the hot ground became cool, and the river was in flood so that the inhabitants of Baret began to cry out piteously. 30. The flood even entered the town so that many houses fell down and the people began to say that the state of things was beyond their power. 31. But there was a pious man who said, 'The Husband of Jānakī is pleased with the noble Vaishnav Janjaswant, 32. who in the *kīrtans* sings of the stories of Shri Raghunāth (i. e., Rāma), saying that if His *bhaktas* are in difficulties the Lord of Vaikunth protects them. 33. Now let us all go to him and say that he should now request Raghunandan to overcome the present calamity.' 34. This advice was accepted by all, so all the inhabitants of the town went to his house.

35. That day the *bhakta* of Shri Rāma was sitting in a *śahaja* posture; in his hand there was a rosary and his head wagged in love as he repeated many prayers. 36. When the inhabitants of the town arrived they prostrated themselves before him with true devotion, but among them were some who with evil intent attacked him in foul language. 37. They said, 'Since the noble Vaishnav Janjaswant lives in the town, how is it that the river rose in flood and that the water came into the town? 38. The people of the town are panic-stricken because of the flood; therefore request Shri Raghuvir (i. e., Rāma) now to remove this calamity. 39. You are always singing of the fame of God, but we shall consider this true only when you have accomplished this.' Thus did the evil-minded speak to him. 40. On hearing their words Janjaswant felt deeply hurt and he at once got up and entered the house of the god. 41. Shutting the door he sat down and closed his eyes, and with a concentrated mind he began to praise Raghunāth (i. e., Rāma). 42. 'Victory, victory, O Lord of Ayodhyā, voluntary Actor, Pervader of the whole universe; Thou dost become the support of Thy *bhaktas*; such is Thy fame in all the three worlds; 43. for when all the gods fell in the prison of Ravan, Thou didst descend as an *avatār* in the Sun family line and didst kill the ten-headed demon (Rāvan); and didst at once free the gods; 44. through the power of Thy name mere stones floated on the ocean; * and now the Tāpī river is in flood and the town is going to be swept away. 45. Oh God of gods, Life of the world, I am not afraid of my own death, but I cannot bear to see the pain suffered by these people.' 46. As the loving *bhakta* said this his eyes were full of

*This refers to Adam's Bridge or Rāma's Causeway (*Rāma Setu*).
See *Stories of Indian Saints*, II, Vol. 10 in this series.

tears, and the Merciful to the lowly came into his contemplation and said, 'Have no concern about this, 47. for though the Tāpī river is inundated, the son of the wind (i. e., Māruti) will drink it all up ; so take Hanumant (i. e., Māruti), and seat him on the banks of the river.' 48. After saying this to Janjaswant, Raghunandan (i. e., Rāma) disappeared ; perhaps only to hide himself in the home he had found in His *bhakta*'s heart. 49. Now the metal image of Māruti was one foot high and so Jaswant lifted it up and took it to the banks of the Tāpī ; 50. there he placed it on the spot where the water had risen most, and all the people of the town came to see it. 51. Then the son of the wind uttered the cry *Bhu, Bhu*, the terrible sound of which stunned the ears. 52. Then the son of the wind assumed a huge form and holding the river he swallowed it up ; for the people could see the water go inside him, 53. the same water that had spread all over the fields and had overleaped the bed of the river ; but now it suddenly subsided and the people witnessed the spectacle. 54. With a cry of ' Victory, Victory ' the *bhaktas* of God became joyful and shouted, ' Blessed is this Vaishnav on earth in this *Kali Yuga* (evil age). ' 55. Then men and women of the town of Baret came to Jaswant, and bowed devotedly to him saying, ' Raghuvir (i. e., Rāma) is pleased with you ; 56. and Hanumant drank the water of the river while we were looking at it ; blessed is the glory of the saint ; how can we describe it ? ' 57. In this way the pious people spoke, praising Jaswant and saying, ' In the form of a Brāhman, Raghupati (i. e., Rāma) himself has descended to the earth.' 58. But there were some who were dubious and evil-minded and did not consider it as true, saying, ' The water had been rising for three days and so now it naturally ran down ; 59. for how can a metal image drink so much water ? What was to happen has happened quite

naturally, so why should he be given the credit for it ? 60. There are many deities made of metal in every house, do they drink water ? Think it over for yourself.' 61. Some said that Jaswant knew the charms of sorcery and that he had given his *mantra* to the simple-minded folk and had made them worship him; 62. if he really had the power to drink the water of the river, why had he gone about begging from door to door ? ' 63. In this way the men who doubted gossiped between themselves, having strong suspicion in their hearts. But Shri Rāmachandra (i. e., Rāma) could not bear it ; 64. for he first makes the evil-minded persecute His *bhaktas* and then works out some miracle through them to increase their fame. 65. Pralhād was His loving *bhakta* and suppliant and he worshipped Him with love, but when Hiranyakashyapu persecuted him, then *Irishikeshī* (i. e., Vishnu) manifested himself in a pillar. 66. King Duryodhana was very evil-minded and persecuted the chaste Draupadī but just as he was in the act of snatching away her garment the Husband of Rukminī rushed to her help. 67. So let us resume our narrative at the point where Māruti drank up the overflowing water of the Tāpī. The men who doubted were shown a wonder. 68. For the beautiful image of Hanumant (i. e., Māruti) was placed on the banks of the Tāpī where the people that day witnessed the wonder with their own eyes. 69. * From the idol in several places a never-failing stream of water began to flow. 70. For over four days and nights the water flowed and many people from different towns came to witness the wonder. 71. The doubtful and the revilers had their hearts so melted that they bowed down at the feet of Janjaswant, 72. saying, 'You are a brave noble Vaishnav and truly a divine *avatār*, for it was you who saved the town.' 73. And the *sagun* image of Māruti

* Verse 69 is abbreviated and both verses 69 and 75 are paraphrased not translated.

drank up the water. At this most wonderful event people prostrated themselves before him; 74. for by constantly worshipping Shri Rāma, Jaswant himself had assumed the form of Rāma, so that his reputation spread amongst the people and the saints and *sādhus* praised him. 75. The image which drank the water is still there on the very spot and the image* has a hole in it; all the people can see it for themselves. 76. In the province of Nandurbār are Jaswant's followers and descendants, at present in Nizave where there is this image of Māruti.

THE STORY OF NIRANJAN SWĀMĪ

77. There is another very delightful story; listen to it, oh pious people, about a great *bhakta* of God by name of Niranjan Swāmi who used to worship Lambodar (i. e., Ganpati). 78. At the junction of the Nāradābindu and Surākarpur rivers there is a great sacred town called Nāmal where he constantly lived. 79. Niranjan Swāmi was always indifferent to worldly things, showing compassion towards all creatures, and looking on the whole world as himself. 80. Every day he performed bathing and offered prayers and worshipped the image of Ganpati; and apart from him he looked at no other deity. 81. The *chūlak* bird does not drink any water on earth, and a child is not pacified without the sight of its mother, nor is the *Chakor* bird satisfied except by the rays from the moon, for it does not care at all for the multitudes of stars. 82. A miser loves money by his body, speech and mind, and in the same manner Niranjan worshipped Gajānan (i. e., Ganpati). 83. And seeing his devotion, Ekadant (i. e., Ganpati) gave him a manifestation. A learned Brāhman had come to meet Niranjan, 84. and he also took a bath and sat down to worship a beautiful image of Ganpati which he worshipped in all the proper ways. 85. The Brāhman

See foregoing note on verse 69.

said to Niranjan, 'I see one thing here in opposition to the *Shāstras*; for though you worship Ganpati, I don't see a *Shāligrām** (the stone emblem of Vishnu) here. 86. Even though you may worship many other deities without the image of Vishnu, you are not authorised to take the sacred water in which they are bathed.' 87. Saying this the Brāhman gave him a *Shāligrām* and requested him to worship it. 88. Niranjan took it in his hand but his heart felt a great reserve and he said to himself, 'So long have I worshipped one deity with sole devotion, and now there will be a deviation.' 89. Then he expressed himself in an *abhang*; here I quote it with love; listen to it, oh pious ones:—

1. I will not give up Thy devotion to Thee, although in worshipping Thee my body may suffer death.
2. I will undergo every persecution, but my mind shall be fixed on Thee.
3. Even if Thou dost become cruel, I will not give up contemplating Thee.
4. Though in my contemplation I may not be able to see Thy complete form, yet I will not give up uttering Thy names.
5. O Lord Ekadant (i. e., Ganpati), Niranjan Swāmī will never give up his devotion to Thee.

90. After reciting the above *abhang* he also recited two *shlokas*. Listeners, note the purport of them : 91. 'Even if all the *Rishis*, ascetics and great Brāhmanas and the thirty-three crores of gods should become angry with me, I will not give up Thy contemplation. 92. Even if the skies break upon me in thunder and even if the whole earth is dissolved under me, still I will not deviate from my devotion; this is my firm resolve.' 93. Seeing the firm devotion of Niranjan, the Lord of Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu) was pleased, and from the *Shāligrām* (the stone image of

* See Appendix on this word.

Vishnu) there suddenly sprouted an elephant's trunk. * 94. Near to him were many *sādhus*, worshippers of Vishnu and great learned Brāhmans, and as they saw the wonderful event they felt astonished. 95. With a loud cry of 'Victory, Victory' they clapped their hands; and the multitude of *bhaktas* of God felt delighted as they made a low bow to Niranjan Swāmī, 96. and said, 'Seeing your devotion the Husband of Lakshmī (i. e., Vishnu) is pleased with you.' The *Shāligrām* stone suddenly began to look like Gajavadan (i. e., Ganpati). 97. The utterly devoted Narahari Sonār worshipped Shri Shankar (i. e., Shiva) and for his sake Pāndurang held a *ling* (i. e., the emblem of Shiva) on his head. 98. For the Soul of the world, the Lord of the world, takes form in accordance with the wishes of His *bhaktas* and thus leads one to worship Him. 99. Seeing the devotion of Yashodā, Shri Krishna became her child, and becoming the wife of Arjun gave him the pleasure of sexual enjoyment. 100. Seeing the ardent longing of His *bhakta*, God took the form of Gajānan and so Niranjan Swāmī began to worship with love the *Shāligrām* image. 101. I have heard of many soul-knowing persons but it was Nāmdev who turned the temple, and such power was not to be seen in them. 102. There are many who speak loudly of spiritual knowledge, and there are many who have mastered all the branches of learning, but an image of Hanumant drinking water is our passing wonder. 103. Without worship and complete devotion no one can have a direct manifestation of God; just as guests of many houses have to go without food. 104. Therefore the fortunate saints have established the worship of a *sagun* image with devotion, and if this means is heartily followed, the seeker of spiritual riches will have a direct manifestation of God.

* The meaning here is that the *Shāligrām* was changed into a Ganpati image.

STORY OF KRISHNADĀS THE VADGAON BRĀHMAN

105. Listen with reverence, oh pious and expert *bhaktas*, to another delightful story. At Vadgaon there was Jayrām Swāmi to whom the Husband of Rukminī had shown himself. 106. If you ask how it was, and which deity he worshipped, and how was his devotion, I will relate these as I am able; listen with reverence, oh ye listeners. 107. There was also there a Brāhman named Krishnadās very righteous and very holy, always worshipping Vishnu and singing his praises with love. 108. When he was a householder a very wonderful event took place. His first wife having died, Krishnadās thought of marrying again, 109. and just then he had to go as a trader with an army which plundered a town, leading to great lamentation. 110. The men and women who had abandoned the town fled from the enemy but he saw at the house of a Brāhman an unmarried girl, 111. beautiful and marriageable. With the consultation of the Brāhman, Krishnadās married the girl and returned to his own town with his wife. 112. After some days had passed, the girl arrived at the mature age and all the religious rites regarding it were performed. 113. One day as she went with a vessel to fetch water from the river she happened to see her maternal uncle, 114. who by caste was a barber, and they at once recognized each other. As she looked at his face very closely she was overcome with emotion; 115. and when he recognized her he remembered her former history and his eyes were filled with tears. Then he said, 'For two years past I have been searching for you, 116. and today we have accidentally met; do you know that your mother is weeping out her very heart for you? 117. His niece then said, 'A foreign army attacked our town, and I hid myself in a neighbouring Brāhman's house, 118. when there came a Brāhman who with the help of another Brāhman married me. 119. Such is my wonderful

fate, so written by the Creator Himself on my forehead. As she related her story in this way to her maternal uncle tears flowed from the eyes of both. 120. Now the conversation which passed between these two had been overheard by other women who had come with pots on their heads to fetch water. 121. As they heard the wonderful story they went into the town and retold other people, so the gossip spread all over the town and people said, 'A very strange thing has happened.' 122. Various kinds of people then began to insult the Brāhman with bad words in different ways, saying, 'In the *Kali Yuga* (evil age) the Brāhmins are entirely blinded by sensual objects; 123. this ill-behaved man joined an army and married the girl of a barber, so that he has created a confusion of castes in his house, and he will experience the hideous agonies of hell; 124. had such an event been in connection with some other caste, the Brāhmins would have condemned it; but since the Brāhmins are at the head of all the castes, they themselves behave in this incorrect way.' 125. The learned Brāhmins of the town themselves said to Kṛṣṇaśaṅkara, 'We have excommunicated you, so as a penance you must now destroy yourself. 126. If the event were new we would have found out some authority from the *Shāstras*, but this has now become old and you have passed through all the sixteen religious rites.' 127. As the earth-gods (i. e., the Brāhmins) said this the evil-minded laughed; and as no one called his action good, he was cast out. 128. On account of this slander his heart was overcome, his eyes were full of tears, and then he began to remember Shri Hari. 129. So he said, 'Travelling through eighty-four hundred thousand births I was fortunate enough to have this human form, and if I destroy my body as a penance it will be committing suicide. 130. After undergoing innumerable (literally, crores) of births, I have obtained this human form; so now with

repentance in my heart I must contemplate the Lord of the world.’ 131. Thus thinking he made a low bow to the Brāhmans and said, ‘ I am your humble servant for ever ; 132. I am fallen from my learning, age, race, and caste ; now only the Lord of Vaikunth, the purifier of the sinful, can surely save me.’ 133. Thus addressing the Brāhmans he began to mutter the names of God and at night he performed the song service of God and started reading the *Dnyāneshwarī* (i. e., Dnyāneshwar’s Marāthī commentary on the *Bhagadgītā*). 134. Then he went as a pilgrim to Pandhari in the months of *Īshādh* (July) and *Kārtik* (November), and bowed devotedly to the loving saints, *mahants* and *rishis*. 135. He had compassion for all creatures and he spent his body in obliging others, but he was not at all sad although he had been excommunicated by his own caste. 136. At night as he performed a *kīrtan* many pious people and women, *shūdras* and others came to listen and their hearts were deeply touched by his performance. 137. But as the earth-gods (i. e., Brāhmans) saw Krishnadās they called him bad names such as ‘ Krishna the barber.’ 138. Some cunningly went to the house of Krishnadās and said, ‘ Shave me.’ The latter replied, ‘ Surely.’ 139. Keeping in his house a razor and a pair of scissors he gladly served the Brāhmans and was not at all sad at his own caste keeping him at a distance. 140. The Brāhmans had excommunicated him and his relatives had abandoned him, so he said, ‘ On account of my good deeds in my former birth I have now become free from pride.’ 141. Every day with the help of *cymbals*, *vīṇā* and drum he performed a clamorous *kīrtan*, also his bath and morning prayers like a Brāhman as before. 142. Such was his condition, and his fame grew day by day, and if you ask how it was, then listen with reverence to the following story.

JAYRĀM SWĀMĪ FINDS A *SADGURU* IN KRISHNADĀS

143. A devoted Brāhman and his wife had arrived at Pandhari; his son's name was Jayrām who was endowed with good qualities and possessed a good character. 144. They first bathed in the Chadrabhāgā river, then visited Pundlik, and circumambulating the sacred town, they arrived at the great door of the temple. 145. With love they prostrated themselves at the eagle-platform and visited Vitthal and Rukminī, their hearts being pleased. 146. Becoming indifferent to his family affairs, he devotedly lived in the sacred town and after some days both husband and wife obtained *Sāyujya** (i. e., they died). 147. Jayrām became indifferent to worldly things when his parents died; directing his love to Shri Pāndurang's feet he remained in Pandhari. 148. He said, 'Oh God of gods Husband of Rukminī, Thou art my father and mother; aside from Thee, I have no brother, nor uncle, nor family deity. 149. Thou art my near and dear relative; besides Thee, I have no sympathiser in the three worlds.' 150. Thus he pleaded, and went on visiting the god thrice a day, and when the Vaishnavs performed the song-services he listened to them with love. 151. One day while sitting listening to the reading of the *Purān* he heard set forth the importance of the service of a *sadguru*, and this attracted his mind; 152. so the longing was aroused within him that he should serve a *guru* as described in the *Guru Gītā*. 153. Then in order to obtain a *sadguru* he began to practise austerities, to bathe in the Chandrabhāgā, and to worship Pundlik. 154. When four *ghatikās* (or, one hour and thirty-six minutes) still remained to the night he circumambulated the sacred town, and then the noble Vaishnav prostrated himself at the great door

See Appendix on this word.

of the temple. 155. He was pleased when he saw the beautiful and tender Giver of salvation, and placing his head on His feet he stored His form in his contemplation. 156. He fasted on the *ekūdashī* day, wakefully observed the Hari watch-night, and listened to *kīrtans* with a heart full of love. 157. He bowed to *sādhus*, saints and Vaishnavs with sincere devotion, and not a single moment passed without repeating God's names. 158. While practising austerities he had only one longing at heart, viz., that he should come across a *sadguru*; he had no other desire. 159. Some days passed in this way, and he had stored up a great deal of righteous deeds; seeing his utter devotion the Lord of Pandharī came and spoke to him in a dream. 160. Assuming the form of a Brāhman, the Husband of Rukminī said to him in this dream, 'In Vadgaon there lives Krishnadās, go to him as a suppliant. 161. If you serve him with true devotion, you will obtain Me.' After Jayrām had seen this vision he awoke, 162. and thinking over the wonderful dream he felt great delight at heart and said, 'Pāndurang has shown me the Saviour, now I will go and see the *sadguru* with my own eyes.' 163. With a mind full of satisfaction he bathed in the Chandrabhāgā, visited Vithobā, and devotedly bowed to His feet, 164. saying, 'Oh God of gods, Husband of Rukminī, let Thy mercy and affection be upon me, for the burden of my support is now on Thy head, so carry me through without any hindrance.' 165. Saying this, his eyes filled with tears of love; again and again he prostrated himself before God, and then came to the great door of the temple. 166. Leaving the sacred Pandharī on his right hand he marched on his way and arriving at Vadgaon he entered the house of the *sadguru*. 167. As he saw Krishnadās he fell prostrate before him and felt greatly delighted at the sight; listen to the following parallels. 168. When the child Dhruv went with a cross mind (at

the treatment of his half-mother) in order to obtain Shri Hari, just then he met the son of Brahmā (i. e., Nārād) and he felt delighted. 169. When Dvaipāyan (i. e., Vyās) was in doubt he saw Nārād. Now with that same delight, Jayrām met his *sadguru*. 170. He related his story to the *sadguru* thus:— ‘I have practised austerities at Pandharī and God has ordered me that I should come as a suppliant to you. 171. Therefore place your assuring hand on my head and grant me your favour (i. e., your *mantra* of initiation).’ Hearing this plea of Jayrām, Krishnadās was astonished at heart, 172. and he said, ‘Why has the Lord of Pandhari sent this hindrance here ?’ Saying this to himself he replied to him thus : 173. ‘By practising the deeds of my caste I have fallen from my caste, and though the Brāhmans told me to destroy my body as a penance, yet I could not give up my affection for it ; 174. therefore the Brāhmans have excommunicated me in anger. I have erected a hut quite isolated from other dwellings here and I sit singing the praises of God. 175. So you go and find out a Brāhman belonging to a good family line and supplicate him, for I have been excommunicated, and I am without any caste or *Varna** (i.e., outside all recognized Hindu classes).’ 176. As Jayrām heard these words of Krishnadās he clasped his feet with his hands and said, ‘If the mother neglects her child, then there is no one else who will take care of it. 177. By body, speech and mind I have come to you as a suppliant ; now look on me with an eye of compassion and purify me, oh *Swāmī*.’ 178. Recognizing his sincere devotion of heart, he placed on his head his assuring hand, gave him his initiatory *mantra*, and then made him worship Shri Krishna. 179. Thus through body, speech and mind did he serve his *sadguru*,

* See Appendix under *Varna*.

and with sole devotion he had his love fixed on him without any idea of duality. 180. The whole matter became indirectly known in the town, and hearing of it the Brāhmans rebuked Jayrām, saying, ‘He has taken the *mantra* of a barber, which is quite in opposition to the *śāstras*. 181. There are many *sadgurus* on earth more knowing and skilful than Krishnadās, so why has he left all them aside and gone in supplication to him ? 182. If good water is mixed with dirty, how can it be sacred ? No one touches it ; and this thing is just like that. 183. Though the son of a sacred Brāhman, he has accepted the *mantra* of a barber ; therefore no one should talk with him.’ So the Brāhmans talked. 184. But that ‘the *sadguru* is the God of gods’ was the firm belief of Jayrām Swāmī, and hence he served his *guru* in a manner unheard of before, and without any sense of duality. 185. But though the Brāhmans excommunicated him, and though he was cast aside by his relatives, yet Jayrām did not mind it, for on his heart was impressed the benefit of his soul. 186. He visited the *Swāmī* thrice daily and served him, in devotion sprinkling his yard with water, and coating the floors with cowdung. 187. In the morning he bathed and cleaned the utensils of worship of his *guru* ; and for the *Swāmī* he kept pots full of pure water (i. e., untouched by hand). 188. He bathed his *guru* with his own hands and gave him the materials of worship ; and on account of his loving devotion nothing was lacking. 189. He served his *guru* with undivided devotion in the way the service of a *sadguru* is described by the *yogis*. 190. He drank with love the sacred water in which the feet of his *sadguru* had been washed, and that gave him poetical power ; and in his song-services he sang of the attributes and names of God. 191. In his *abhangs* he would call himself Jayrām, the servant of Krishna, and hearing his words full of love the

listeners felt a great joy. 192. The simple-minded, devoted and loving *bhaktas* bowed down to him, and leaving aside the struggle of their hearts they listened to his delightful *kīrtans*. 193. But Brāhmans and pandits who were well-versed in the *Vedas* and the *Shāstras* would not even see him, and then there happened a very wonderful event; listen to it, ye good people and devoted ones. 194. One day Shankarāchārya arrived there suddenly and all the Brāhmans went to visit him. 195. Prostrating before him they brought him into the town, and after worshipping him they all dined. 196. As the *mahant* sat on his seat, all the Brāhmans came and said to him, 'Oh *Swāmī*, a very bad thing has happened here. 197. There is a Brāhman lad named Jayrām who has taken the *mantra* of a barber *guru* and with love and delight he serves him day and night.' 198. As the chief religious man reported the matter to the *Swāmī* the latter was roused to anger and said, 'Go and bind both the *guru* and his disciple and bring them here.' 199. At the *Swāmī*'s order the Brāhmans felt very glad and said to one another, 'His popularity has grown very much and now he will be punished without any effort.' 200. The disciples of Shankarāchārya soon arrived in the hermitage of Krishnādās and they dragged Jayrām out and brought him straight before the *Swāmī*. 201. Then the Achārya said to him in anger, 'How is it you have taken the *mantra* of a barber?' 202. You set aside the Brāhmans who are the highest of all castes and have gone in supplication to a fallen person, so we shall now punish you.' 203. As he heard these words Jayrām prostrated himself before him with sincere devotion and said, 'I look upon my *guru* as the image of Shri Krishna Himself, therefore it is that I have become his suppliant. 204. The *Swāmī* should do me the favour of coming with me to that place, and if he is proved to be a barber then I may be punished.' 205. As the *mahant*

(i. e., Shankarāchārya) heard these words he was very astonished and saying, ' Let us see what sort of Shri Krishna he is,' he set off to go with him. 206. Shankarāchārya then entered the hermitage of Krishnadās who was just then worshipping Vishnu after having first bathed. 207. Seeing the devotion of Jayrām his *sadguru* had assumed the form of Shri Krishna, and the Āchārya saw him with four arms like the Lord of Vaikunth (i. e., Vishnu). 208. With the eight affections* of the body he prostrated himself before him with love, at which sight the Brāhmans very much wondered, for they did not know the secret. 209. Then Shankarāchārya addressed Jayrām saying, ' Blessed is your devotion of love, for without doubt I see Krishnadās as the image of Pāndurang ; 210. now serve him with your body, speech and mind ; though the Brāhmans have excommunicated him, from to-day he is free from it.' 211. Then all the Brāhmans accepted the decision of the *Swāmī* and thereby his reputation spread wonderfully. 212. In the next chapter, the Giver of salvation will cause me to write the book ; by His favour Mahipati speaks words of blessing. 213. *Swasti* (Peace) ! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmrit*. By merely listening to it one's longings are fulfilled ; may the pious and loving *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the fiftieth delightful chapter.

* See under ' Numeral 8 ' on p. 439 of *Stories of Indian Saints*, II, Vol. 10 in this series.

CHAPTER LI

PART I

MĀNKOJĪ BODHLĀ ; MADHVANĀTH ; A MUSLIM
FAKĪR; AND KAVOPANT

GOD'S HELP IN COMPOSING THE *BHAKTALĪLĀMRIT*

1. Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Victory to the Brother of the helpless, Lord of Pandhari, Ocean of Mercy, Husband of Rukmini, Pervader of the Universe, Father of Brahmadev. Thou art the One who art relating the stories of Thy *bhaktas*. 2. Oh Husband of Rukmini, Thou hast done a most remarkable thing, for Thou hast caused this book to be written by the hands of one who is mentally deficient; Thou hast done this in order that the high reputation of Thy servants may become known in all the three worlds. 3. Wind of its own accord makes the grass scare-crow in the field to wave; so, oh Pāndurang, it is by Thy power I have written these verses, good or poor. 4. Through the support of some donor a beggar can manage somehow to live, and the blind are able to walk fast by holding the hand of one who sees. 5. So by Thy grace, O Shri Hari, I have composed this book in my uncouth way. Now bring these words to a good conclusion and make the fame of Thy *bhaktas* known world-wide.

6. Let the hearers now give close attention, for these stories have come to their final chapter, a pinnacle as it were; just as when cream is churned, butter is obtained; 7. or just after a farmer has laboured hard and the clouds have poured down much rain, and after all his different kinds of grain have ripened, he worships their great heap. 8. So by the grace of Pāndurang the field of the *Bhaktalīlāmrit* has ripened. Listeners, your good fortune is great; there is no lack of good fortune for you.

9. The stories in past chapters were such as; Māruti coming to the aid of Janjaswant; and seeing the *bhakti* of Niranjan Swāmī, a stone emblem of Vishnu suddenly burst forth with an elephant's trunk. 10. There were Krishnadās and Jayrām who so reverently worshipped his *sadguru* and showed miracles to Shankarāchārya.

MĀNKOJĪ BODHLĀ OF DHĀMANGAON

11. Now in the village of Dhāmangaon the chief official was a God-loving *bhakta* named Mānkoji; with love he was accustomed to worship Pāndurang in a spirit of indifference to worldly things. 12. His wife Mamatai was supremely pious and faithful to her husband, and when the lord of her life became indifferent to worldly things she was content that he should seek the supreme spiritual riches. 13. Her firstborn son was Lakhamoji by name but he did not like such utter devotion as was given by his father. 14. He complained that his father should not neglect his worldly affairs and give himself to the repeating of God's name; 'It makes the evil-minded laugh at us and makes us feel ashamed,' he said. 15. Now there was born a younger son of noble qualities named Yamāji and the third son was Vithobā, the youngest of them all. 16. The middle son by name of Yamāji was very friendly with his father Mānkoji Bodhlā and when this God-loving *bhakta* performed a *kīrtan* he stood behind him and played on the cymbal. 17. He put away all thoughts of shame and popular regard, abandoned all the snares of desires and in the joy of love led the chorus with intense pleasure and love. 18. Bodhlā was a very generous man of supremely noble character and brave. He refused nothing whatever to anyone who asked him for anything, and he had his fields completely looted by others. 19. The Lord of the heart being pleased with him, he brought ears of corn on the barren stocks, and the empty

grain-bins though many were now filled with grain. 20. He offered his body, mind and wealth to Pāndurang, and by doing so his good fame spread, people saying, 'Shri Hari is favourable to him. 21. He gives food to the hungry and water to the thirsty, and his wife and son are in agreement with him; so his good deeds are not hindered.' 22. The wife of his son (Yamāji) was supremely pious and of noble characteristics. Her name was Bhāgīrathī and she was a mine of beauty and a faithful wife. 23. Winning the good will of her mother-in-law and father-in-law she carried on her daily affairs and whenever the mendicants desired anything, even when it was not in the house, she got it for them. 24. With love and reverence she sat repeating the names of God, and when Bodhlā stood up to perform his *kīrtan* she would sit listening with deep attention. 25. Bodhlā's method of loving worship was first to sing the praises of God and then making a waive-offering over the Husband of Rukminī he would begin his *kīrtan*. 26. He had not before him any memorized verses, but he would extemporize the words of blessing, and Pāndurang, the Husband of Rukminī, would stand behind him, cymbal in hand. 27. When the deity presiding over all acts of entertainment led the chorus in his *kīrtans* the result was that listeners filled with love assembled in innumerable numbers. 28. With cymbals, *vīṇā* and drum the sound filled the air with their loud music, and when there was added to it the loud noise of handclapping those who heard it lost all consciousness of body. 29. The *Bhāgavat Dharma* (or religious conception of God) in which the power of His name is supremely emphasised, and the way of *bhakti* as set forth in these *kīrtans*, were what the loving saints listened to. 30. Hearing of Bodhlā's honoured fame, the Muslim king was pleased, and at once sending his servants for him took him to his capital. 31. The king said to Bodhlā, 'You have

greatly increased your heresy. What about your ancestors? Show me some miracle.' 32. Having had some food prepared consisting of meat, this evil one had it brought carefully covered up, and said to him, 'Eat this and become a Muslim.' 33. Seeing that he had fallen into a very difficult position Bodhlā called for Pāndurang's help, exclaiming, 'Oh Lord of Pandharī, God supreme, come quickly to my help, O Krishna. 34. Aside from thee, O Lord of Pandharī, I have no mother, father, brother or uncle. If Thou shouldst neglect me now, who have I, a helpless one, to care for me? 35. As he thus called for help the tears flowed from his eyes and immediately the Husband of Rukmini came to Bodhlā's assistance. Listen to what it was, you pious *bhaktas*. 36. The cloth was removed from off the meat which had been brought to be eaten so that he might see it, and immediately to his sight it appeared as roses. 37. Seeing this remarkable thing the king's servants brought it to show to the king and exclaimed that the meat had turned into flowers, and all were exclaiming to Bodhlā, 'Blessed, blessed art thou!' 38. The king said to him, 'You are a very firm *bhakta* of Vishnu. The Husband of Rukmini has come to your help in time of trouble and shown this seemingly impossible miracle. 39. If you will ask me for the grant of the revenue of any village I will give it to you.' But this servant of Vishnu who was always indifferent to the things of this world would not take any money nor any property; 40. so lovingly performing his worship he came back to his town of Dhāmangaon.

MĀNKOJĪ GIVES HIS DAUGHTER-IN-LAW TO A *FAKĪR*

Suddenly on one occasion the Recliner upon the Serpent (i. e., Vishnu) came to test his goodness. 41. The Lord of Pandharī in the form of a Muslim *fakīr* (or mendicant) came to his home when Bodhlā came forward at once

and said to him, 'Ask whatever you may wish. 42. Ask for food, clothing, money or property just as you need.' Recognizing Bodhlā's true feeling the Life of the world meant to test him. 43. Shripati (i. e., Vishnu or Krishna) said to him, 'I wish you to offer to me today your daughter-in-law, Bhāgirathī, who is so beautiful in form and comely in every way.' 44. Hearing these words the true and courageous man fell into a difficulty, and calling his son he consulted with him, 45. saying, 'If a guest goes away dissatisfied then our reputation will be injured, so tell me at once what may be in your mind.' 46. Yamāji was a supremely good son and hearing what his father had to say he placed his head upon his father's feet and spoke to him in these nectar words: 47. 'Whatever your desire may be, father; that is for my supreme good; let me always be as a slave sold to you.' 48. Hearing what his son said, Bodhlā was much pleased, and he then very lovingly consulting his daughter-in-law, saying to her, 'I am going to give you to this Muslim *fakīr*.' 49. Hearing this, Bhāgirathī placed her head upon his feet, 'A slave has no rights whatever,' she said, 'so why do you needlessly ask me?' 50. After hearing the thoughts of all, the *fakīr* said to Bodhlā, 'At once give her the bath of blessing and prepare a feast of dainty food; 51. if I take her far away to my hermitage, your love for her will make you want to see her and then in the end I shall have to go away empty-handed.' Such were the words of the Lord of the world. 52. After this reply of the *fakīr* there was not the least scruple remaining in the mind of Bodhlā who was a veritable ocean of righteousness and he replied, 'Let your mind be at rest about that.' 53. Then they gave Bhāgirathī the bath that symbolized blessing, clothed her with new garments, rubbed saffron all over her body, placed the *Kunku** on her forehead

* See Appendix on *Kunku*.

and prepared a feast. 54. The *fakīr* remained standing in the front yard, and Bodhlā brought the daughter-in-law and gave her to him ; saying, ‘ May you be blessed.’ Such were the words of blessing from his lips. 55. The *fakīr* then took Bhāgīrathī on his shoulder and walked on quickly, while Bodhlā’s mind was full of joy and in no degree troubled. 56. As the *fakīr* passed through the town the men and women of the place saw him and exclaimed, ‘ Bodhlā has become very crazy, he must have been affected by some blunder in the use of a *mantra*. 57. If anything has to be given to a guest, it should be an offering of food or garments, but he has given the *fakīr* one of his own household : he must have a very hard heart. 58. He who had not enough to give away from the greens on his plate has really given his daughter-in-law ; by his meditation on Vithobā he has brought ruin to his family.’ 59. In this way the men and women of the town and everywhere reviled him, and no one in the town approved of his action. But now listen to what happened. 60. The Life of the world in the form of a *fakīr* had accepted the gift of Bhāgīrathī and after reaching the border of the town he performed a miracle. 61. Taking her down from His shoulder He at once assumed His four-armed form. Seeing His conch shell, His disc, His silk yellow robe, the eyes of people danced with joy. 62. Bhāgīrathī in her love bowed at the feet of Shri Hari ; and the dark-complexioned One held her to His heart, as she looked at the supreme Brahm. 63. Embracing her, the Lord of the world said, ‘ I shall be born as an *avatār* from you ; such is going to be the fact ; 64. so return to your own village for your own good.’ *The people from afar saw Him very clearly. 65. Keeping in her remembrance the feet of Bodhlā, Bhāgīrathī looked towards her village and at that moment the *fakīr* became invisible and then she broke

out into a loud cry, 66. saying, 'The *swāmī* into whose hands I was given has become invisible and I do not see any path I can follow.' Saying this she was in deep sorrow. 67. 'If I should go back to my home now my husband and father-in-law will be angry with me. What shall I do? Oh Saviour of the world, come to my help. 68. I have lost earthly gain and also the supreme spiritual riches.' As she thus sorrowed, people heard of what had happened, 69. and they came into the town at once and informed Bodhlā of the news, saying, 'You gave your daughter-in-law to the *fakīr* and he has disappeared. 70. At the border of our town, Bhāgirathī is mourning her condition.'

MĀNKOJĪ BODHLĀ'S VINDICATION

Hearing this report Bodhlā felt a great joy. 71. Then he said to his son, 'The eagle-bannered one (i. e., Vishnu) has preserved our reputation for truth, from now on your name is Dharmarāj; 72. your name was Yamāji but I will change your name;' and from that time everybody called him Dharmarāj, meaning that he was firm in righteousness. 73. The noble Vaishnav then taking with him the cymbal and drum lovingly performed an enthusiastic *kīrtan* loudly singing with love the praise of God. 74. Shouting out the names of Vitthal pious people assembled together and all felt great joy. They exclaimed, 'Blessed is this happy day.' 75. While performing his *kīrtan* Bodhlā came to the border of the town and when Bhāgirathī saw him she bowed reverently at his feet. 76. The noble Vaishnav raised her up and on her head placed his hand of assurance, saying, 'Mother, blessed are you, true and courageous one. You have acquired *Shūrangdhar* (i. e., Vishnu). 77. The Lord of Pandharī becoming a *fakīr* came here to test my love of truth. He put you on his shoulder and brought

you to this point. I cannot adequately describe your good fortune.' 78. Speaking to her in this way he then performed there a *kīrtan* and then taking Bhāgirathī with him he returned to his home. 79. While in the forest, that form of Pāndurang showing her His favour had given to Bhāgirathī a promise. 80. The Life of the world had lovingly entered her womb, and the child that was born was given the name of Bhagwantbowā. 81. The son of that Bhagwantbowā lives at Dhāmangaon, and in the month of *Āshādh* (July) a pilgrimage takes place there and the saints in great numbers gather there. 82. Thus the Husband of Rukmini increases the good name of his servants, and from age to age the pious listen to their stories with reverence.

MADHVANĀTH OF NASIK

83. There was a Brāhman by name of Madhvanāth in Janasthān (i. e., Nasik). He regularly performed his baths in the Godāvarī river, 84. and lovingly repeated the names of God. With devoted attention he praised and worshipped Shri Pāndurang. 85. As he thus continued praising God's name the Lord of Vaikunth came to him in a visible form and in a vision He told him to proclaim His fame. 86. 'Saraswati, the goddess of speech, will take her seat at the tip of your tongue; then sing my praises with love.' Such was the command of the Life of the world. 87. The moment that Shri Krishna gave this command, Madhvanāth was immediately inspired to write poetry. By taking a mere glance over other poetic books, he was able immediately to memorize them. 88. His *kīrtans* were accompanied by drum, *vīṇā* and cymbal played in sweet accord, and as the *kīrtan* proceeded with his loving heart, listeners were moved by emotion. 89. When listeners heard his inspired verses they all felt great joy. Forgetting everything they lost even

consciousness of body just while they were repeating God's name. 90. The Lord of Pandharī then gave him a command: 'Go around the country preaching with your own lips the way of *bhakti*. It is truly called the *Bhāgavat Dharma* (i. e., the God-given religion). 91. If heretics and false reasoners persecute you, I, the Recliner on the serpent, will protect you.' The moment he received this command he began his journey. 92. As he passed over the country he performed enthusiastic *kīrtans* along the way; a few disciples accompanied him and they came to a certain city, 93. called Aurangābād, where there were some pious and distinguished men and some wealthy persons who listened with loving reverence to Madhvanāth's *kīrtans*. 94. Paying him great honour they made Madhvanāth to continue among them. It was in the minds of all that he should even bring his family there. 95. As he witnessed their good feelings it pleased him. So he immediately sent a horse and a man and brought his wife there. 96. Without asking anything of them, all his domestic affairs went on smoothly, and his company of disciples always served him reverently. 97. In whatever homes the *kīrtans* were performed there the Brāhmins received offerings, and the Brāhmins were given all kinds of dainty food at the feast prepared for them. 98. For many days the *kīrtans* were enthusiastically performed and his inspiring poems were listened to with deep interest. 99. From one part of the country to another the fame and victory of Madhvanāth became well known. It was said, 'No one is so eloquent; Shri Hari must be his helper.'

PANDIT BHĀSKARRĀO OF BOMBAY LEARNS
SOMETHING NEW

100. Now there was in Bombay one Kānhoji Āngre, a pious and very generous man. Fourteen hundred wise

pandits were under his patronage. 101. The chief among these pandits whenever a debate was on was called Bhāskarrāo. 102. He said to his patron that one should not listen to a *Hari-kīrtan* in the Marāthī language. After he had given this decision with proofs his patron said to him, 103. 'There are very many clever speakers amongst these servants of Hari who come here at the time of festivals; arrange for a debate with them on this point and show your superiority over them.' 104. The pandit vowed that he would conquer the Haridās in argument and then they would stop reading Marāthī books and give up all *kīrtans* performed in the Marāthī language. 105. After this vow many a Haridās suddenly appeared on the scene and there was constant discussion on the subject; but that pandit proved invincible.

106. On the other hand the Lord of Pandhārī appeared to Madhvanāth in a dream, commanding him that he should go to Bombay and giving him instructions as to what he was to do there. 107. The moment he received this command he at once started for Bombay. He took his family with him and also his company of disciples. 108. He took with him sweet-sounding cymbals, *vinūs* and drums, and also the leader of his chorus, and travelling along steadily they soon arrived at Bombay. 109. The high reputation of Madhvanāth had already spread amongst the people and as soon as the patron understood that he was near, he lovingly went out to meet him. 110. Reverently he made him a prostrate *namaskār* and lovingly gave him an embrace. Having prepared everything for him at his lodgings Madhvanāth's company had a very satisfactory meal. 111. The Pandit Bhāskarrāo soon heard of the news, namely, that Madhvanāth had come from his city to perform here a *Hari-kīrtan*, 112. that he was superior to all other speakers and composed very inspiring poetry; when he heard this news his pride increased a

hundredfold. 113. He exclaimed, 'If I can overcome him, then all *kīrtans* in the Marāthī language will be stopped.' With this pride in his heart he felt a hatred towards this *bhakta* of Vishnu. 114. At night-time the patron arranged for seats of honour in the assembly hall, and many *Haridūses* and Brāhman pandits sat down to listen. 115. Bhāskar Pandit sat in the chief seat and was muttering with rage. He was like a second Jamadagnī (i. e., the father of Parashurām)* as one looked at him. 116. Madhvanāth the true Vaishnav now arrived for the *kīrtan*, and bowed reverently to the assembly of Brāhmans. 117. Seeing this great *Mahant* they suddenly stood up to honour him. Musical instruments now began to play and Madhvanāth began his *kīrtan*. 118. To begin with there were the songs of praise, but at the mention of God and Dnyāneshwar, rage filled the great pandit's heart and he bit his quivering lips. 119. Just as Rāvan became filled with rage as he thought of Shri Rāma, so did this pandit now feel, and he was eager for a discussion. 120. Said he, 'This son of a *sannyāsī* (i. e., Dnyāneshwar)† is called the *avatār* of Vishnu. Let us be told what *Shāstra* is his authority for this.' 121. Madhvanāth replied to him, 'The Lord of Vaikunth who assumes such a body as He pleases, what need has He for the highest caste? He descends for the good of His *bhaktas*. 122. The Life of the world of His own accord assumed the *avatār* of the fish, of the tortoise, of the wild boar and there was no lack of prowess. That was described by Dvaipāyan (i. e., Vyās) ‡ in the *Bhāgavat Purān*. 123. Nivritti, Dnyāndev, Sopān and that treasure of good qualities, Muktabāi, they descended as *avatārs* and as

* See Index of *Stories of Indian Saints*, II, vol. 10 of this series. Jamadagnī was the father of Parashurām, who was anger incarnate. It was he who asked Parashurām to kill his wife Renukā.

‡ See pages 45-50 in this book.

† See under *Vyās* in *Stories of Indian Saints*, II, p. 415.

children of an ascetic and they showed wonderful miracles. 124. The twice-born at Pratiśthān (i. e., Paithan) greatly persecuted them and so by the mouth of a male-buffalo the whole of the *Vedas* were repeated. 125. Neither God nor His *bhaktas* pay regard to family or caste, for an *avatār* is here for the good of the world. 126. There is no means in this *Kalī Yuga* (evil age) of greater value than the name of God. The authority for this is in the *Bhāgwat Purān* as stated by Dvaipāyan (i. e., Vyās). 127. Here he repeated a Sanskrit verse and after explaining its meaning in Marāthī, he then quoted *abhangs* of Tukāram and explained some portions of the *Upanishads*: 128. 'The power of God's name is infinitely pure. It has nothing to do with space or time. When Ajāmīl repeated the name of his son (which was Nārāyan) he received immediately his final deliverance. 129. The prostitute who was a mine of evil deeds, when she called out to her parrot (which was named) Rāghav (i. e., Rāma), was immediately carried to Vaikunth (i. e., the heavenly home). These wonderful things are all told in the *Purāns*.' 130. Carrying on the debate thus far Madhvanāth then began the loud repeating of the names of Vitthal. The loud sound was like a mighty wave and there was no limit to the joy that was felt. 131. Listening to this *kīrtan*, the pandits lost their pride and said, 'This is not really Madhvanāth. He seems like God in visible form.' 132. Then Bhāskarrāo the great pandit arose and reverently bowed to Madhvanāth. Holding him close to his heart he gave him a loving embrace, 133. and exclaimed, 'It is evident that aside from the names of God there is no greater means of salvation. So carry on your *Hari-kīrtans*, for by these will men be saved. 134. Although we repeat the stories in the *Purāns* in Sanskrit, still we have to explain them in Marāthī. In the same way the poets have composed their poetry. So now we fully understand

this.' 135. Having thus spoken they embraced one another. The *Haridāses* shouted aloud the names of God, and turning to Madhvanāth they said, 'Blessed art thou.' 136. Then they lighted the auspicious lamps before the Husband of Rukmini. The Vaishnavs also shouted the names of God and sweetmeats were distributed. 137. Then the patron with affection offered garments, adornments and money to Madhvanāth, but he would not accept them, however much they pressed him. Madhvanāth exclaimed, 'I am indifferent to all worldly things; 138. lovingly honour these pandits and *Haridāses* and Brāhmans. That will please my mind and give me happiness in abundance.' 139. Having thus spoken, Madhvanāth set off with all his company of disciples, and having thus established the way of *bhakti* he returned to his city.

LAKSHMAN OF AURANGĀBĀD

140. Now in Aurangābād there was a citizen by name of Lakshman who came as a suppliant to Madhvanāth and soon received the instructions that made him a disciple. 141. In order to provide for his family he carried on his business in the village office, and after finishing his day's occupation in his business affairs he would go to visit his *Śvāmī*. 142. When Madhvanāth was performing his *kīrtans* Lakshman led the chorus. He sounded the cymbal keeping the most perfect time. 143. Their voices harmonized perfectly, and as both sang in complete harmony there was intense enthusiasm in their *kīrtan* which made all the people wonder. 144. The day that Lakshman was not there the *Harī-kīrtan* was not performed; but he used to put aside his thousand and one duties and come rushing in haste to help in the *kīrtan*. 145. There with reverence, having completed his daily toil, he would lead the chorus, and by his good deeds the

Husband of Rukmini became his debtor. 146. It happened on one occasion that at the home of Madhvanāth there was to be a very great festival and all the necessary preparations had been made, 147. But the master of Lakshman, Visājipant by name, as he looked over his accounts saw there was a discrepancy. 148. Other accountants clearly showed the discrepancies to be sixteen hundred rupees and as Lakshman declined to pay that amount Visājipant put him into prison. 149. Hāji Mahammad Khān was *Kotwāl* (or the officer at the prison) and the twice-born Visāji had informed him of the deficit and had put Lakshman into prison. 150. Lakshman was very sad and mourned night and day, saying, 'A festival has been arranged at the house of my *sadguru* and here is my sad condition. 151. Oh Ocean of mercy, Lord of Pandhari, come here and deliver me, for the helpless and the lowly have no one to help them but Thee.' 152. Meanwhile some of the disciples of Madhvanāth came and informed him, 'The master of Lakshman has put him into prison. 153. A festival has been arranged at your house and all the necessary preparations have been made but how can the *kīrtan* go on without him?' The servant of Vishnu then went to the house of Visāji. 154. In the court were seated great men who stood up as he approached and he said, 'For four days give Lakshman into my keeping. 155. After the festival is over I will convey him back to you; then whatever may be the law, do accordingly.' 156. Although the *bhakta* of Vishnu said this they would not listen to his proposition but insisted, 'Give the sixteen hundred rupees and then you may take him.' 157. Madhvanāth replied, 'A company of my disciples will come to the festival. I will give them the command and through them I will give you the money.' 158. Although he said this with his own lips no one believed him. They did not know the power of the *bhakta* of Vishnu who is blind to the influence of

money. 159. The Vishnu-*bhakta* finding his proposition unaccepted returned to his home, and the Lord of the heart then showed a miracle. Let good men listen attentively to what it was. 160. The next day the festival began. The Vaishnavs were lovingly worshipped. Dainty food was given to the Brāhmans, and they were made happy with gifts. 161. There was a loud noise from the drums and trumpets. Banners with the designs of an eagle were raised and at night the *kīrtan* began and people assembled to listen. 162. There were many other *Haridāses* and they performed their *kīrtan* for three hours, but all had the great desire to listen to the *kīrtan* to be performed by Madhvanāth. 163. He said to the God-loving *bhaktas*, 'I have no one to help me in the chorus'; and bringing Lakshman to mind his throat choked with emotion. 164. Seeing this condition of Madhvanāth, there were some with tender hearts and full of love for him and their tears also flowed with his. 165. Seeing that His loving one had fallen into great distress Shri Hari came to his help. Listen with reverence to how he did it, you wise ones.

GOD AS A MUSLIM *FAKĪR* PUNISHES VISĀJĪPANT

166. The proud Visāji would not listen to the request of Madhvanāth, so the Soul of the world taking the form of a *Fakīr* punished him. 167. The Life of the world could not bear to see His servants persecuted. While the *Kotwāl* (or jail superintendent) was asleep the God of heaven (lit., the Lord of Vaikunth) did as follows. 168. In the form of an officer of justice he gave the jail warden a beating and welts arose on his back till blood flowed. 169. Very angrily he said to him, 'You have thrown Lakshman into prison. Now take him out at once and go to where Madhvanāth lives. 170. If you hesitate, you will receive still greater punishment.' After doing

this wonderful thing, what did *Shārangdhar* (i. e., Vishnu) do? 171. As Visājipant was asleep at his home, Hari went in the form of a *Fakīr* and gave him a beating also and said, 'Come, get up quickly.' 172. In the meantime Hājī Mahammad the *Kotwāl* (or prison warden) was greatly frightened. He took Lakshmanpant along with him and hurried from the prison. 173. Taking torches and guards they rode on horseback and arrived in the old bazaar at the house of Visājipant. 174. Two watches of the night had already passed, and as all the servants were asleep he called out very loudly that they should quickly arouse their master. 175. When Visājipant came outside his house he saw the prison-warden standing there. Showing to Visāji the welts upon his back, 176. the warden said, 'It is because you have kept Lakshman in the prison that God has given me this beating, and now I will no longer engage in worldly affairs. I am going to become a *fakīr* at once.' 177. He removed his garments and adornments and over his neck he put a *fakīr's* long robe. Visāji implored him not to do so, but he would not listen. 178. Those men who are excited by their passions may be converted but those attached to worldly things will not leave their worldly life even though they see a miracle. 179. Hājī Mahammad Khān was large-minded and he seated Lakshman on the horse on which he himself had come, sending him to Madhvanāth's festival.

PĀNDURANG DELIVERS LAKSHMAN FROM PRISON

180. Madhvanāth was sitting ready for his *kīrtan* and smilingly said to all the people, 'After about two *ghatkās* Lakshman will come.' 181. The company of disciples hearing him say this wondered, saying, 'He has been put into prison.' So no one felt what Madhvanāth said was true. 182. But after the two *ghatkās* Lakshman came riding on a horse accompanied by guards and torches, and every one witnessed this. 183. Approaching with great

reverence he placed his head at his *sadguru*'s feet and told him all that had happened, at which all the people wondered. 184. So when Madhvanāth arose to perform his *kīrtan* there was great joy amongst them and they all gave strict attention. 185. With cries of 'Victory, Victory,' the whole assembly of *bhaktas* rejoiced and the name of Vitthal was shouted aloud with clapping of hands. 186. The *kīrtan* continued until sunrise during the four watches of the night. Then the hymns of praise were sung and the lights were waived over the Husband of Rukminī. 187. All the people of the sacred city gave praise to Madhvanāth and exclaimed, 'Blessed, blessed are you, for you have shown us a very wonderful miracle.' 188. The prison warden Hājī Mahammad Khān repenting of his deed, adopted the life of a *Fakīr*, and after visiting Madhvanāth he went to live in the *rosā* (or *Fakīr*'s residence). 189. Here in love enthusiastic *kīrtans* were performed daily and the *Gopāl-kūlā** and dramatic performances at the end made it a great festival. 190. Just then a citizen of Sendurvādā made a request to Madhvanāth that he should come to his town and make his abode here. 191. As he knew what it would lead to in the future, he accepted the invitation and together with his family he very lovingly made his abode there. 192. In front of the town in a little rivulet was an image of the deity Mhasobā, and they had given it the name of Ganesh, a festival being performed there. 193. Seeing Madhvanāth's deep devotion the Bhāgirathi river came there and a tank was built in her honour and the people bathed in it. 194. His glory spread and many people came to visit him from afar. On account of old age he became weak in body. 195. Sorrow had come to his mind that he could not go to Pandharī. If Vithobā would only give an appearance of himself he would be very happy. 196. Seeing what his condition

* See under this word in Appendix.

of mind was *Chakrapānī* (i. e., Krishna) informed him in a vision that he was in the yard of Uddhavbhat: 197. ' So go to that place and dig down into the ground a fathom and a half, and you will find an image of me there; have no doubt about this. 198. Because of your love and *bhakti*, I, the Giver of eternal life have come there.' Having seen this vision in his dream Madhvanāth felt great joy. 199. When morning came he quickly performed the repeating of God's name and then went to Uddhavbhat and told him all that had happened. 200. He said, ' In the ground in your yard there is an image of Pāndurang without any doubt.' Then with a pick and shovel he dug into the ground with his own hands. 201. Having first put his own hand to the task, his company of disciples then got together and soon all were engaged in digging joyfully into the earth. 202. They dug for a fathom and a half and the images of Pandurang and Rukmini were discovered, beautiful and with smiling faces, both being extremely charming. 203. Seeing this wonderful thing all clapped their hands and cried, ' Victory, Victory.' The whole assembly of *bhaktas* rejoiced and the sky reverberated with the shouts of God's name. 204. Madhvanāth then erected a temple in the ground of Uddhavbhat and the images were installed there after selecting an auspicious occasion, 205. *Mantras* from the *Vedas* were repeated, and Brāhmans anointed the images which were bathed in the five nectars and clothed with garments and adornments. 206. Fragrant powders, flowers and garlands of *tulsi* were placed around them, incense and a platter of lights and camphor were waved and dainty food was served on plates, and the offerings were quickly brought. 207. Sweet sounding instruments were played at the door and loud was the sound of the cymbals and drums. Then after lighting the platter of light it was waved over the Husband of

Rukminī. 208. Dainty food was prepared and given to the Brāhmans. At night a *Hari-kīrtan* took place and people listened with great pleasure. 209. Madhvanāth celebrated the Gopālkālā* and the dramatic performance; and to this very day a great festival is held at this temple in December (lit., Mārgeshwar; the correct word is *Mārgashīrsha*). 210. Thus did Madhvanāth with the disciple Lakshman lead the chorus, for the Lord of Pandharī had delivered him from prison. This story you have now heard.

KĀVOPANT OF NAGAR

211. Kāvopant of Nagar also rendered a very great service and spent a great deal of money upon it. He arranged a great festival. 212. Through the favour of his *guru* all the three worlds seemed to him to be in the form of soul. He had a great desire to listen to a *kīrtan* and so he took up his abode in Pandharī. 213. He accepted the fourth stage of life (i. e., *sannyāsa*) and then left his body in the bed of the Chandrabhāgā river. His third disciple by name of Amritrāya is well-known among all men. 214. Then he received the inspiration of composing poetry, and he described in a wonderful way the good deeds of Bhagwant (i. e., God).

MAHĪPATI'S HUMILITY

Such have been the lives of the saints. But how could I, one of dull mind, rightly describe them? 215. I have however written them in this book somehow or other in my uncouth speech. I do not in the least remember how I described their lives. 216. The Husband of Rukminī, living in my heart, every moment brings their stories to my memory, and causes me to write the very letters, because he is very fond of the lives of His *bhaktas*. 217. By the favour of Shri Pāndurang the

*See Appendix.

blessed words have been written in this book. The contemplation of them will prevent forgetting them.

PART II

RECAPITULATION OF THE *BHAKTALĪLĀMRIT*

Chap. 1-12 : *Agradās and Nābhājī; Chāṅgdev;*

Dnyāneshwar; Nānak; Kabīr and Rohidās.

218. In the *first chapter* there is the praise given to Ganesh, Saraswatī and the saints. Then the *sadguru* Tukārām is worshipped and flowers in the form of verses are offered to him. 219. Through the favour of Agradās, Nābhājī acquired full knowledge and described the lives of saints, and this is the description in the *first chapter*. 220. In the *second chapter* the sweet story is told of how Purandar (i. e., Indra) cursed a *Marudgana* (i. e., one of the forty-nine immortals) and the result was that Chāṅgdev became an *avatār*, who turned his brass cup into an emblem of God. 221. In the *third chapter* there is the story of the male buffalo repeating the *Vedas*, and the hearing of this famous deed by Dnyāndev caused Chāṅgdev to desire a meeting with Dnyāndev. 222. In the *fourth chapter* there is the story of how the *Marudgana* (i. e., in the form of Chāṅgdev) came with his disciples riding upon tigers with snakes as whips to meet Dnyāndev. Then Dnyāndev caused the wall to move. 223. In the *fifth chapter* Chāṅgdev searches for the meaning of the sixty-five verses (lit. *Pāshasthī*) and asks that one of his disciples will give himself as an offering, but all the fourteen hundred disciples ran away. 224. In the *sixth chapter* is the story of Chāṅgdev's *avatār* in Nārāyaṇdoha and of his going to Pandharī where the feet of Pāndurang were embraced by him. 225. In the *seventh chapter* is the story of how some bones were washed and the water was given for drinking to a widow to whom at once a son was born who received

the name of *Bhāllavandya* (i. e., one who overturns rice). 226. In the *eighth chapter* there is fully told the story of the Life of the world coming as a nurse under the name of *Krishnābāi* who cared for the wife of Yādav during the birth of a child on the banks of the Mahī river. 227. In the *ninth chapter* there is the beautiful story of how Chāngdev went to Bedar and raised to life the Muslim King's wife and then how he returned to Pandharī. 228. After Chāngdev had rebuilt the temple of Pāndurang he entered *samādhi* and twelve years afterwards he visited his son; this is told in the *tenth chapter*. 229. In the *eleventh chapter* there is a description of Nānak and in the *twelfth chapter* is the quarrel between Kabīr and Rohidās.

CHAPS. 13-24: LIFE OF EKNĀTH*

230. In the *thirteenth chapter* is the famous story of Shri Eknāth when he came as a suppliant to his *guru* Janārdan and how the god Datatrēya gave him a promise. 231. In the *fourteenth chapter* there is the remarkable story of how Eknāth was sent on a pilgrimage, and how his grandfather and grandmother were in deep sorrow and how Janārdan consoled them. 232. In the *fifteenth chapter* is told how at the command of his *sadguru*, Eknāth settled in Pratishthan (i. e., Paithan) and how God in the form of Vitthal led the chorus. 233. In the *sixteenth chapter* we are told how God took the form of Uddhav and how, seeing Eknāth's supreme devotion, he paid off his debt to him. 234. In the *seventeenth chapter* is told how God seeing the devotion of Eknāth went to a Brāhman in his dream in the form of an image of Pāndurang. 235. In the *eighteenth chapter* we are told of Eknāth going to Pandharī and in a *Kīrtan* very lovingly singing about the life of Bhānudās. 236. In the *nineteenth chapter* we have the

* These chapters (13-24) are translated into English in *Eknāth*, the second volume in this series.

story of how he gave a living burial to Dandvate because of which the Brāhman̄s persecuted him very severely, and he had to perform a miracle making a stone bull eat straw. 237. In the *twentieth chapter* is related how Hari in the form of a Brāhman named Shrikhandyā became Eknāth's water carrier, and how a Mahār prisoner came to his house and how he protected him. 238. In the *twenty-first chapter* we are told how Eknāth took two forms and gratified the wish of the unmentionables (by eating with them) and how the Pandits (of Benares) threw his translation of the *Bhāgavat* into the river. 239. In the *twenty-second chapter* † we are told how when Eknāth was reading the *Bhāgavat*, the daughter of Vishnu (i. e., the river Ganges) taking the form of a woman came to listen. 240. The *twenty-third chapter* tells of how this noble Vaishnav was dining in a Brāhman woman's house, and how after dining, a miracle was shown to her son by a thousand plates appearing one beneath the other. 241. In the *twenty-fourth chapter* is the description of how Eknāth caused the dumb idiot Gāvji to compose his (Marāthī) Rāmāyan and how Eknāth brought about his own *saṁūdhi*.

CHAPS. 25-40 : LIFE OF TUKĀRĀM*

242. In the *twenty-fifth chapter* we have the story of Vishvambar and Amābāi and how seeing their *bhakti* the Recliner upon the Serpent came to the village of Dehū from Pandharī. 243. In the *twenty-sixth chapter* the story is told how seeing the *bhakti* of Bolhobā, Nāmdēv was born of him as an *avalār* and how the *avalār* was named Tukārām. 244. In the *twenty-seventh chapter*

† Portions of this 22nd chapter of the *Bhaktalīlāmirt* (verses 48-65 and 79-101) are translated in *Dāsonant Digambar*, vol. 4 in this series.

* These chapters (25-40) are translated in *Tukārām*, the 7th volume in this series.

the story is told how this *bhakta* of Vishnu went to sell his load of pepper and gave it away on credit, and how God collected the sum by threatening to hang himself if these rascals would not pay. 245. The *twenty-eighth chapter* tells of the death of Tukārām's wife from lack of food, then how Tukārām abandoned his worldly affairs and retired to the hills. 246. In the *twenty-ninth chapter* is told the story of how Tukārām sat in a field to protect it, and how the birds ate up all the grain; then the Lord of Pandhari came to his rescue. 247. In the *thirtieth chapter* we are told of how when Tukārām's other wife Āvalī was pierced with a thorn, how Pāndurang himself came and drew it out, and how Tukārām rebuilt the temple. 248. In the *thirty-first chapter* we are told of how Āvalī, having performed her bath God caused her to put on the yellow robe, and giving her the materials for cooking he gave a feast to the ancestors. 249. In the *thirty-second chapter* is told how Tukārām received the inspiration to become a poet, and how when thieves stole his buffalo the Lord of Vaikunth brought it back to him. 250. In the *thirty-third chapter* the story is related of how Tukārām in his dream received the instruction that made him a disciple and how when his wife was about to dash her child upon the feet of the idol, *Chakrapānī* (i. e., Krishna) came to her aid. 251. The beautiful story told in the *thirty-fourth chapter* is the account of how Tukārām gave advice to his wife, how she became indifferent to worldly things and how they had Brāhmans come and loot all their possessions. 252. In the *thirty-fifth chapter* the story is this, that Tukārām threw his manuscript of *abhangs* into the river. The Lord of Pandhari himself preserved them and Rāmeshwar came as a suppliant to Tukārām. 253. In the *thirty-sixth chapter* is told how after perceiving Tukārām's manner of life Angada acquired peace of mind, also how King Shivāji came as a

suppliant. 254. In the *thirty-seventh chapter* the Vaishnav *bhakta* (Tukārām) goes to the temple of Mahādev (i. e., Shiva), he gives a feast to Shiva who appeared in the form of a *sannyāsī*, and how he wrote a most unusual letter to Pandharpur. 255. The *thirty-eighth chapter* has the story of Shripād and the two *sannyāsīs* and how the complaint of the two *sannyāsīs* was carried by them to Poona and how God there showed a miracle. 256. In the *thirty-ninth chapter* we are told how Tukārām cut his flesh open and showed it as being filled with cotton, and how birds sat on Tukārām. 257. In the *fortieth chapter* we have the story of how Tukārām in the presence of saints and *sādhus* went up to Vaikunth (i. e., the home in Vishnu's heaven) along with his body, and how God showered on him divine flowers.

CHAPS. 41-51: LIVES OF VARIOUS WELL- KNOWN SAINTS

258. In the *forty-first chapter* we have mention of the lives of many. Let you pious ones listen to their names and details with reverence. 259. In that *forty-first chapter* are mentioned Keshav Swāmī, Bājid Pathān, Santobā Pawār, and Mālobā all of whom God met. 260. The King Narapāl, Premābāi, King Rāmrajā, Shilābāi, Ramābāi, Pilābāi are described in the *forty-second chapter*. 261. In the *forty-third chapter* we are told of Vogarāsā, and the *bhakta* Rāmchandra, Rāmānuja, Suhāgashah, Jayamalla, and the Rajput Panhājī. 262. In the *forty-fourth chapter* Haripāl, Jasu Kunbī, Dhanjāt whose field was sown densely, and the happy Mādhavdās whom Hari protected. 263. In the *forty-fifth chapter* the story is told of Lālhan Khojī the servant of Tripur, Trilochan the goldsmith, Hari Vyāsa, Sajan the butcher, a specially great saint. 264. In the *forty-sixth chapter* is related the stories of Naravāhan, Angada, Mādhavsingh, King Sekhavat, Kuva-

rābāi, and the meeting between Giridharlāl and the Recliner on the serpent (i. e., Vishnu). 265. In the *forty-seventh chapter* mention is made of Kāji Mahammad, Sheik Farid, Balakhbukhārī the Mahammadan king, Jayrām Bābā and Rāmchandrabhat the Brāhman. 266. In the *forty-eighth chapter* Ratnākar the Brāhman made the Gomati flow, Mādhavdās at Surat became well-known, and seeing the devotion of Vitthal Purandar the Husband of Rukmini helped him. 267. In the *forty-ninth chapter* is mentioned Narasinha Saraswatī who lived a very noble life and Mahāmudgalbhat the noble Vaishnav whom Shri Rāma met. 268. In the *fiftieth chapter* there are three stories, those of Janjaswant, Niranjan, and Krishnadās Jayrām whose stories are wonderful. 269. In the *fifty-first chapter* we are told of how Shripati tested the determination of Bodhlā and was offered his daughter-in-law, Bhāgirathi the righteous and brave. 270. Seeing the devotion of Madhvanāth the Lord of Vaikunth came to Sendurvādā; this is in the last chapter recently heard by the saints. 271. In these *fifty-one chapters* the lives of many saints have been described. In this last chapter only the summary is given.

PART III

OTHER SAINTS : KNOWN AND UNKNOWN

272. There are immense numbers of other *bhaktas* who have been enumerated in the *Bhaktavijaya*, and some in the *Santlīlāmrit*; listen to their names. 273. The greatest *bhakta* of them all was Nāndev the *avatār* of Uddhava, then Sāvata the gardener, Narahari the goldsmith, Kubā the potter and Gorā. 274. Jagamitra, Nāga, Visā Khechar, Sālyārasāl, Bhāgwat, Parasā, Surdās, and Bahirāpisā; the Lord of Vaikunth was very fond of them. 275. Jaydev Swāmī, Karmābāi, Narasī Mehta, Mirābāi, Rājāi, Gonāi,

all of whom made the Recliner on the Serpent subservient to them. 276. The *bhakta* Kamāl, Tulsidās, Pipāji and Surdās, Govinddās resident of Mathurā who played continually with Shri Hari; 277. Paramānanda Jogā, Visobā Khechar, Padmanābh a Brāhman, Chokhāmēlā the Mahār, Sumatī and Kamlākar and his son Padmakār; 278. Nārāyan, Mahādev, Govind and the youngest Vitthal by name were the sons of Nāmdev whom the Life of the world never forgot; 279. Narahari and Shridharpant, the *bhakta* Lādu who lived in Jotipur, and Nārāyan Swāmī the Paramahansa (or supreme *sannyāsi*) whose deeds were marvellous; 280. Nimbrāj and Rāmdās, Madan Mohan, Surdās and Ganeshnāth whose enthusiastic *kīrtans* in his love were very pleasing to God; 281. Uddhavchidghan the great *bhakta* who wrote of the lives of many saints, Rangāswāmī of Nigdi, a noble Vaishnav and a very wise man; 282. Shridhar Swāmī, also a wise poet who wrote a commentary on the *Bhāgavat* (*Purān*), and Shankarāchārya an *avalār* who taught the *Karma Mārga* (way of works); 283. Hariānand Hastāmal and Rāghavānand the God-loving *bhakta*, with whom the dark-complexioned one (i. e., Krishna) was constantly playing; 284. Vishnushyām the clever teacher, Sanak and the others, Anandānandan, Nimānuja, Mādhavanandan who worshipped the Life of the world. 285. The chief of *Yogis* who were Matsyendra, Goraksha *gosūi*, Gopīchand, Queen Maināvati and Jālandhar Munī the spiritual expert; 286. Charpatī, Chaurangī, Halsī, Avaghad, all well-known in the world, Mrityunjaya the great *yogi*, and Mudhya with whom God dwelt; 287. Senā the barber, Trilochan, Dnyāndev, Nivrīti, Sopān, Muktabāi the mine of goodness, whom the Husband of Rukmini never forgot; 288. Dhāngo the shoemaker, Rākā the potter and his wife Bākā and daughter Vankā, who made the Lord of Vaikunth subservient to them; 289. the

world-famous Mukundarāj, who composed the *Viveka-Sindhu*, Mudhopant and Dāmājipant who were well-pleasing to God; 290. Kānhopātrā, Pimpalā, Bālā, Mirā and Girdhar the simple-minded saint; Alahayogānanda, the God-loving *bhakta* who ever stood near the dark-complexioned one; 291. Karmachand Sāri, Rāmdās, Shrirang and Kīlākdās, Bhuvan and Harivyās were *bhaktas* loved by god; 292. Krishna Chaitanya, Banasidhar, Kamalā, Karmāli great *bhaktas*, Nāmā Pāthak the noble Vaishnav, and the great poet Mukteshwar; 293. Vallabāchārya, Bālakrām, Uddhavrāj the sincere *bhakta*, Vimalānanda whose devotion the Good Being saw and then came and lived where he was; 294. Chaturā, Nāgā Lakshman, Chintāmani, Chaturbhuj, Nrupanandan, Sukhānand and Nārāyan who were worshipping God continually; 295. Dāmodar, Gangā the great poet, Prayāgdās, Ānandanandana, Mādhavdās, Madhusūdan whom the Life of the world never forgot; 296. Ramābāi, Lālā Gomati, Venūbāi and the chaste Girijā, and Kūrmadās, seeing whose devotion the image of Pāndurang came to him; 297. the great *bhakta* Keshav Chaitanya, Rāghavchaitanya of renown, and Bābā Chaitanya the well-known saint who established the *Bhakti Mārga* (way of devotion); 298. Haridās, Kānhayā who lived at Pandharpur, and Pralhād the *Budva* (or priest) with whom Shri Hari continually associated himself; 299. Visobā Sarāf of Nimbsod who was supremely generous, true and brave, so that the Husband of Rukmini defrayed his debt; 300. Raghupati a wise man through the favour of the Serpent, Krishnadās Lolyā the man well-known in the world, Udbodh the mine of love, Rudrāi the *yogini* (or female ascetic) and a very great person; 301. Shivrām Gosāvi of Paithan, Nārāyan the son of Nimbyā, Nilobā Gosāvi the noble Vaishnav who founded Pimpalner; 302. this garland of saint-jewels Pāndurang made and hung

around his neck, and the Joy of the universe, the Image of the supreme Brahm, enjoys the pleasure of wearing it. 303. There are many other saints, some unknown and some well-known in the world, at whose feet I, Mahipati, lay my head in love. 304. With sincere devotion they became pilgrims to Pandhārī where they sing the praises of God; and I bow to them.

SAINTS OF GOD INNUMERABLE

305. The Vaishnav *bhaktas* are innumerable and there are to be many more in the future. Those who have lived already cannot be numbered; for listen to the following statement. 306. Shri Rāma was an *avatār* assumed by God, and with him there were eighteen billion saints of indescribable glory. It is impossible to give all their names. 307. When the dark-complexioned one (i. e., Vishnu) took the Krishna *avatār*, the cowherds became His *bhaktas*. He protected the cows, calves, *Rishis* and the cowherds. 308. There were five hundred and sixty million Yādavs, nine lakhs of cowherds and cowherdresses, and Vyās and others have not been able to give their names. 309. And if they have not, how can I, Mahipati, a mere mosquito, weak in intellect, dull in mind, give their names? The cause of my failure is easily seen. 310. I do not know any occupation connected with domestic life. How then am I to spend my time? Therefore, I of dull mind, have taken to describing the history of the saints. 311. I have no great association with saints. I live in an insignificant village. I have not even the authority of accurate historians. 312. I have not a good hand in writing. I do not know any of the *fifty-six* languages. I cannot speak Sanskrit properly. Every one knows this. 313. But the Husband of Rukmini has come into my heart, and caused me though dull of mind to write this book. Now you kindly be pleased with the stories of

these saints and read to the end of my verses. 314. Just as the tree called Korātyā has thorns all over it and yet the Husband of Mridānī (i. e., Shiva) takes great delight in its flowers ; 315. and when the wealthy do not mind the blackness of the leaves of the musk, knowing that it chiefly furnishes fragrances they keep it in their houses. 316. So because my words are uncouth, still wise people must not reject them ; just as the prattling words the little child speaks are repeated by its mother. 317. The chief purpose of this book is to show how God comes to the help of his *bhakṭas* and how the Husband of Rukminī will grant the longing desires of those who listen and of those who relate the stories. 318. If one keeps the book in his home the difficulties of life will vanish away ; and the *sudarshan* disk of Vishnu will protect us ; be assured of this. 319. When one reads the lives of the saints, immediately the mind is purified. No longer will there remain any hatred, and by that the ocean of this life will be crossed. 320. Such was the boon given me by the Merciful One. I am but an instrument on which He depends. I am only the channel conveying His message. 321. Who the first saint was or who the last I do not truly know. Just as out of the sea pearls are taken, but when stringing them together the order of their discovery is not known, 322. and when one is making a garland of champak flowers he does not know which flowers blossomed first, for all the flowers look alike ; 323. so in starting the ceremony of worshipping the goddess of speech I have made a garland of *tulsi* leaves in the form of saints, and with reverence I have worshipped the Husband of Rukminī whose home is at Pandharpur.

WHEN AND WHERE THE *BHAKTALĪLĀMRIT*
WAS WRITTEN

324. In the *Shaka* era sixteen hundred and ninety-six (i. e., A. D. 1774) in the *Samvatsar* (year) by name *Jaya*, on the fourth night of the dark half of the month of *Phālgun* (March) this book was finished. 325. Ten miles to the South of the Pravara River is the town of *Tāhārābād*, where this delightful *Bhaktalīlāmrit* was composed.

MAHĪPATI ASKS FOR A BOON FROM GOD

326. Victory to God Supreme, the eagle-bannered One ! I have worshipped Thee with word-flowers. Now I ask, oh, *Adhokshaja* (i. e., Vishnu), for a boon that will fulfil my longing. 327. I do not care for the enjoyment of heaven nor for final deliverance. I ask not for wealth nor property, but I ask that I may sing the praises of Thy servants. Oh Shripati ! cause me to do this. 328. Thou mayest say that now that the lives of these saints have been finished I must not continue with poetry, but even if Thou shouldst thus speak to me, I will not listen. 329. I will verify these lives and shall again and again sing about them. If I have any other wish may my speech be swept out of me. 330. I do not care for philosophical knowledge of Brahm; I have no need of those *Yoga* practices; but with my eyes I want to see God with attributes; I have no other request than this to make. 331. I shall continue constantly to describe the lives of the saints, though as a mere servant I ought to stand at a distance; but if I become absorbed in Thee (i. e., by death), then how can I get this privilege ? 332. Though a poet may highly praise the king or his ministers or his son, yet the king does not seat the poet beside him. 333. Therefore I have no authority to claim final salvation. Give my tongue the power to sing Thy praise, and let my heart find a

home for Thy form. 334. With feelings of devotion I have in love of Thee sung of Thy deeds. This is the longing that I, Mahipati, have, that I may sing of the good deeds of Thy saints; so fulfil my longing, O Pāndurang.

335. *Swasti* (Peace) ! This book is the *Shrī Bhaktalīlāmrīt*. Merely by listening to it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the fifty-first most delightful chapter. The chapters number 51 and the verses 10,794.

APPENDIX :

NOTES ON SPECIAL MARATHI WORDS

It might have⁷ been possible to have used fewer Marathi words in these translations, but where there is no English word that exactly expresses the Marathi word or where it requires a whole English phrase to express the meaning of a simple Marathi word, it has seemed better to keep the Marathi word, so familiar to India, and let the English reader learn its meaning by its context, or by the following Notes. English literature is already enriched by many Marathi words and there is no reason why it should not still further be enriched. On the other hand there are certain words that are untranslatable except by a long explanation; others, where even the English word conveys only a part of the Marathi meaning. We have translated these words and expressions as best we could, but it seems worth while to include some of these words in these Notes in order that the reader, familiar with both languages, may understand why we have used the special English word or words, sometimes in opposition to dictionary authorities, even Molesworth. Usage has to be considered, as well as etymological meaning. The Notes will furnish the examples that have suggested the above remarks. We have used Molesworth's definitions freely, as carrying authority, but occasionally modified them, as Molesworth needs revision in some parts; e. g., see under *Pāp* and *Punya* in this Appendix.

Abhang. A particular metrical composition in Marathi. It is the popular metre of the poet-saints in their hymns of praise; e. g., the *abhangs* of Eknāth, the *abhangs* of Tukārām, etc.

Abheda-bhakta. A *bhakta* who has the conception of no-difference (*abheda*) between the *paramātmā* and the individual *ātmā*. *Abheda-bhakti* is the worship of God in harmony with the conception of the identity of the *paramātmā* and the soul (*ātmā*) of the worshipper.

Āchārya. Head of a religious order or sect.

Adhelū. A copper coin worth half a pice.

Agnihotri. A Brāhman priest who maintains the sacrificial fire.

Alms. In chapter i. verse 47 we have the words भवति भिक्षां देहि (*bhavati bhikshām delu*) 'Oh lady, give me alms.' With these words a Brāhman student (a *Brahmachārī*) begs for his food. For while staying with his *guru* (or spiritual guide) during his student life, he has to live on food received by begging from door to door. Even to this day this custom is observed and when a Brāhman boy is invested with the sacred thread he is made to beg of the ladies assembled for the ceremony. Many Brāhman students still live on food received by begging. Such food if cooked is called मधुकरी (*madhukarī*) and if dry corn is called कोरुन्न (*Korūnna*).

Amra. Nectar. The drink that prevents death.

Angira (अंगिरा=अंगिरस). In chapter iii. 14 and elsewhere Angiras is one of the ten मानसपुत्र (*Mānasputras*) i. e., mind-born sons of Brahmadev; the name of his wife was Shradhā. Three sons were born to her: Brihaspati, Ūtathya and Samvata (बृहस्पति, उत्थय व संवत). This Brihaspati was the *guru* of Indra and the gods.

Anupacha. Favour, grace, kindness, instructing in mystical verses of incantations.

Anushthāna. Performance of certain ceremonies and works in propitiation of a god.

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Āraṭi. (1) The ceremony of waving around an idol, *guru*, etc., a platter containing a burning lamp. (2) The platter and lamp waved. (3) The piece of poetry chanted on the occasion of the ceremony of waving, expressing praise or worship.

Āshrama. (1) The abode of saints and *rishis*. (2) The word is also applied to the four stages of living, the *Brahmacharya*, or the period of chaste youth and study; the *Grihastha*, the householder in his married and secular life; the *Vānaprastha*, who as age comes on passes his worldly cares over to others, and goes into the forest for meditation; and the fourth the *Sannyāsa*, who entirely abandons all worldly cares, delights and passions, and is wholly absorbed in contemplation or the worship of God. These four *āshramas* are considered the ideal life for a Brāhman.

Ātmā. The soul, the soul of the universe, the human soul, the vivifying principle, the self, the ego. For clearness the Soul of the universe is spoken of as *paramā* (Supreme) *ātmā* to distinguish it from the individual *ātmā*; the two, however, in Vedāntic philosophy being identical. *Brahma*, or the *Parama-ātmā*, partially defined as *sat-chāt-ānanda* (existence, intelligence, joy) is the sole existing substance. The universe, as it appears in animate and inanimate forms, with their special names, is but the form in which the *ātmā*, the *parama-ātmā*, or *Brahma* manifests itself. The human soul or *ātmā* is, therefore, only a form in which the *paramātmā* appears. The great sentence, *aḥambrahmāsmi*, 'I am Brahma,' is the conscious acceptance of the philosophic postulate of the oneness of the soul of the universe with the individual soul.

Avatār. Etymologically it means, 'one who has descended.' A divine *avatār* is the coming down to earth

of such a divine being, as for example, Vishnu in the form of Krishna or Rāma. In Indian mythology, as well as in all popular conceptions, these *avatārs* are for the sake of combating some evil condition or conditions in this world, or to save the world from its sin and misery. The number of the chief *avatārs* is ten : (1) *Matsya* (fish), (2) *Kūrma* (tortoise), (3) *Varāha* (boar), (4) *Narasinha* (half man, half lion), (5) *Vāman* (dwarf), (6) *Parashurām* (the axe-wielder), (7) *Rāma*, (8) *Krishna*, (9) *Buddha*, (10) *Kalankī* (a name of Vishnu). Human *avatārs* are also recognized (*mānava avatār*), that is, a good man who has died, reappears later in some other good man, to carry on, or to complete, the work of the former. Eknāth is spoken of as an *avatār* of Dnyāndev, and Tukārām as an *avatār* of Nāmdev. Or Eknāth, for example, is spoken of as an *avatār* of God, making him, therefore, both divine and human.

Avatārs In Part. In ii. 23 we have translated the phrase घेतौल अवतार अंश रूपे as follows :— ‘They will assume *avatārs* by means of their portions.’ Of the ten *avatārs* only two, viz., Rāma and Krishna, are supposed by some to be पूर्ण or complete *avatārs* (but see our Introduction pp. xxiv-xxvi for the opposite view); the remaining eight are अंशावतार or *avatārs* in part only. The Hindu view is that the supreme God, or Vishnu, used only a portion of His Self to assume these eight *avatārs*, and His complete self to assume the पूर्ण or complete *avatārs*. Similarly the *avatārs* named Nivrittī, Dnyāndev, Sopān and Muktabāi are अंशावतार, or *avatārs* in part. See also our Introduction, pages xxiv-xxvi.

Bachanūg. Poisonous root of the Gloriosa Superba.

Bairāgī. See under *Vairāgī*.

Bhāgavat Purāṇ (भागवत पुराण). One of the eighteen *Purāṇs* in which there are stories about the incarnations of Vishnu and other praises of Lord Vishnu. See our Introduction, pages **xxi-xxiii**.

Bhajan. 1. Adoration or worship. 2. Repeating the names of God as an act of worship. 3. A hymn or verses, generally *abhangs*, sung in the worship of God.

Bhakta. (1) A worshipper, votary, or follower of one devoted or attached to. While the above definition is etymologically correct as to its usage by the poet-saints, there is connected with it a moral idea. A *bhakta* implies a really pious man. A hypocrite is not a *bhakta*, though technically and outwardly he might appear to be one. (2) A special religious class devoted to the religious life. As the different manifestations of God, and the various *avatārs* appeal differently to different minds, there is a personal choice as well as the traditional, or family choice of the special manifestation of God. There is therefore, a *Vishnu-bhakta*, a *Shiva-bhakta*, a *Hari-bhakta*, a *Rāma-bhakta*, a *Vīṭthal-bhakta*, and so forth.

Bhakti. Literally worship or adoration. It is the attitude of the *bhakta* towards God. It always implies a moral idea of sincerity and purity of worship, accompanied with love. Again and again the poet-saints affirm that there can be no *bhakti* without sincerity and love. *Bhakti* is, therefore, more than mere worship, which can so easily be a mere outward form. *Bhakti* must be the true feeling of the heart, of reverence, and love of God, whether expressed in outer forms of worship, or in the mental worship (*Mūnaspūjā*).

Bhakti-mārga. The Way of Devotion. Three ways are recognized for the deliverance of man from the succession

of births and deaths, with their sins and sorrows, and with their good deeds and joys as well. The *Dnyān-mārga* (The Way of Knowledge) holds the highest place in the minds of philosophers, because, when by true Knowledge, Ignorance disappears, all causes of sin and sorrow disappear. The *Karma-mārga* or Way of Works is recognized by the poet-saints as a way, but a very hard way, and a very dangerous way. In the case of both the above ways the danger is pride, and with pride comes a fall. The safe way, the sure way, the easy way, for all, high or low, is the *bhakti-mārga*, in which a man throws himself on the mercy of God; *bhakti* on man's part, and mercy, forgiveness, and salvation on God's part. With *bhakti* sincere, and the consequent gift from God of *moksha* (salvation, deliverance), a return to this earth is avoided and there is eternal life in the presence of God. Because it is a sure and easy way for all, the poet-saints give the *bhakti-mārga* the highest preference. Although the word etymologically does not imply it, the usage of the poet-saints in strongest terms emphasizes the moral side of *bhakti*; not only sincerity in *bhakti*, but a pure ethical life is essential to the very idea of *bhakti*. Eknāth's writings are especially emphatic on this importance of internal and external moral purity.

Brahma. The one substance of which all existing things consist. Existing things have names and forms (*nāma* and *rūpa*). That they exist and have *forms* and *names* is as real as is the real substance of *Brahma*. To consider these forms, however, as different from *Brahma*, making a duality, is due to *ignorance*, that ignorance personified being called *māyā* (which see).

Brahmachārī. A Brāhman who observes the strictest.

APPENDIX

chastity for a time or for life from a religious motive.
One in the first stage of life, a bachelor.

Brāhman. See under *Varna*.

Brahmāṇḍ (ब्रह्मांड). In chapter iii. verse 46 this word means the crown of the human head. '*Brahma-randhra*' (ब्रह्मरंध्र) refers to an aperture, supposed to be at the crown of the head through which the soul is said to escape at the death of the body. When the soul is taken to this point the man is said to have taken *samādhi* (समाधी). A real *sannyāsī* in olden days left this world only in this way. When he took *samādhi* the head was broken to let out the vital airs and then the body was buried. Even to this day when a *sannyāsī* dies, his head is hit with a cocoanut to signify the breaking of the head to let out the vital airs. In the following verse the word दशमद्वार (the tenth opening) means the tenth aperture of the body or the *brahma-randhra* (ब्रह्मरंध्र) through which the soul is said to pass at death. The life of an ordinary mortal leaves through one of the nine organs (two ears, two eyes, two nostrils, the mouth, the urethra, and the anus); while that of a *yogī* through the tenth.

Caste. See under *Varna*.

Chakor. A bird that is said to subsist on moon-beams. This idea is very frequently used in poetic figures and illustrations.

Chāṅgdev's Fourteen Hundred Years. In Ch. iii. 56-60, IV. 22 and other places it is stated that Chāṅgdev had lived fourteen hundred years. This subject is briefly referred to by Prof. R. D. Ranade in his able book published in 1933 entitled *Indian Mysticism : Mysticism In Mahārāshtra* which is volume 7 in the eight-volume *History of Indian Philosophy*, by Prof. S. K. Belvalkar and Prof. Ranade, though only two volumes (this

and volume 2 entitled *The Creative Period*) have as yet been published up to 1935. On page 45 Prof. Ranade writes : ' Tradition says that Chāṅgdev lived for fourteen hundred years, which evidently is an impossibility. The meaning of the statement may only be that there were different Chāṅgdevs of the same name, or there must be the same Chāṅgdev who got different names in different places which he visited, or that it was a family appellation used by all. Nilobā tells us in his *Abhangs* that there were fourteen different names of Chāṅgdev, which might be a reason why Chāṅgdev may have been supposed to have lived for fourteen hundred years. It was not uncustomary in ancient times for a wise man to be known by different names.... Rāmdās was himself known as Vipra, Īakīrajindā, Rāmīrāmdās. Even so, it might be the case with Chāṅgdev. Two of the names of Chāṅgdev especially have been mentioned in the *Chāṅgdev Pāsashtī*, viz., Vateshachāṅgā, and Chakra-pānīchāṅgā, which two names then must be identified. Chāṅgdev may have been known as Vateshachāṅgā after the deity whom he worshipped [See Ch. iii. 7]. It seems that Chāṅgdev may have acquired certain powers by means of his *Hathayoga* [हठयोग, on this word see below]. But when he met Dnyāndev and others his arrogance disappeared and he began to pine after spiritual life. The *Chāṅgdev Pāsashtī* was composed by Dnyāndev just at this time. It embodies Advaitic advice to Chāṅgdev.... It seems that Chāṅgdev was initiated by Muktabāī in the spiritual line.... Chāṅgdev died on the Godāvarī in 1305 A. D. (*Shake* 1227), that is to say, some ten years after Dnyāndev, Muktabāī and others. He could very well say in pride that he was the culmination of the spiritual knowledge of Nivrittināth, Dnyāndev, Sopān and Muktabāī. In a

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beautiful *abhang* Chāngdev tells us: “Dnyāndev drank to his fill the water of pearls; Nivriddhān caught in his hands the shade of the clouds; Sopān decorated himself with the garland of fragrance; Muktabāī fed herself on cooked diamonds; the secret of all four has come to my hands, says Chāngdev.” On page 179 Prof. Ranade states: ‘Chāngdev is a sublime illustration of the insufficiency of the life of mere Yogic power before a truly mystical attainment of God;’ and on page 117 he states: ‘Dnyāneshwar, however, is not unaware of the difficulties that beset the practitioner of *Hathayoga*, who goes on meditating without having an iota of devotion in him. Such a man’s state he describes in the twelfth chapter [of the *Dnyāneshwari*], contrasting it with the fate of a man who follows the path of *bhakti*. . . . “It is what one may call a husband-less *yoga*. . . . Those, therefore, who follow this path, have only misery reserved for themselves. If a man who has lost his teeth, were to eat morsels of iron beads, tell me whether he will live or die. . . . On the other hand, those who go by the path of *bhakti* can never experience such hardships on their way to God.”’ The meaning of the word *Hathayoga* (हठयोग) is given in Molesworth’s Marathi-English Dictionary, p. 883, thus: ‘A mode of *Yoga* or abstract contemplation whilst suspending the breath. Applied generally to modes of austere devotion (as to the standing upon one leg, holding up the arms, inhaling smoke with the head inverted, etc., opposed to *rājayoga* (राजयोग).’ This latter word Molesworth defines on page 689 as follows: ‘A simple and easy mode of abstract meditation, as distinguished from the austere and rigorous modes. The supreme or most excellent *yoga*, viz., holding secular grandeur or opulence, yet maintain-

ing spiritual separateness and the exercises of abstract speculation.' V. S. Apte's *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (p. 1021) defines *Hathayoga* (हठयोग) as ' a particular mode of *yoga* or practising abstract meditation because it is very difficult to practise; it may be performed in various ways, such as by standing on one leg, holding up the arms, inhaling smoke with the head inverted, etc.' Its opposite, *Rājayoga* (राजयोग), the same dictionary (p. 799) defines as follows : 'An easy mode of religious meditation (fit for kings to practise), as distinguished from the more rigorous one called हठयोग.'

Charitra. Actions, deeds, proceedings, exploits, history.

Chātaka. A bird said to drink only from the clouds, hence always eager for the rain. The idea is very frequently used in poetic figures and illustrations.

Chuplā. A musical instrument, consisting of two sticks rattled together.

Chūt. A fireplace. In its simplicity it may be three stones so arranged as to have the fire between them, and the pot or pan resting on them, or a semicircular erection on earth to contain the fire in its cavity and support the cooking vessel on its rim.

Cloud of mercy (करुणाघन *Karunāghana*). This is often used when addressing Vishnu. God is compared to a cloud that pours forth water.

Daitya (दैत्य). See i. 99, etc. A demon or a *Rākshasa*.

Dakṣhīnā. Money or presents given to Brāhmins and others on special occasions.

Dark as a cloud (घननील *Ghananīla*). This is an epithet of Vishnu often applied to Vithobā and Krishna.

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Darshan. Literally, sight, seeing, looking. In the religious usage of the word there is, however, much more than the physical sight, seeing or looking. There is an implication of respect, reverence and worship. There is no English word corresponding with this use of *darshan*.

Dasarā. A festival commemorating the period of the year when the Maratha kings started out on their campaigns, on the tenth day in the bright half of *Ashvin*.

Dhotar. The garment worn by men, consisting of a long piece of cloth wound around the lower part of the body, tucked in front at the waist and also behind taking the place of the European trousers.

Divālī. The annual festival of lights, two days at the end of the month of *Ashvin* and two days in the beginning of *Kārtik*.

Dnyān. (1) Knowledge in general. (2) Knowledge of a specific and religious kind, that which is derived from meditation and the study of philosophy; which teaches man the divine origin and nature of his immaterial portion, and the unreality of corporal enjoyments, sufferings and experiences, and the illusoriness of the external and objective universe; and which sanctifying him during life from earthly attachments and fleshly affections, accomplishes for him after death emancipation from individual existence and reunion with the universal spirit. In some parts of India the word is pronounced *gyān*.

Dnyān-mārga. The Way of Knowledge. (See *Dnyān*).

Ekādashī. Used frequently for the eleventh day of the waxing moon (the bright fortnight) or of the waning moon (the dark fortnight). With all Vaishnavs the eleventh day in each fortnight of the lunar month

is a fast day. The great *Ekādashī* days are the 11th of *Āshādh* (June or July) and of *Kārtik* (October or November); other *ekādashī* days are the ' monthly elevenths ' and for *Wārkaris* (see under this word) are called *waris* (periodical pilgrimages). ' He who observes not the 11th day know him for a living corpse, ' says Tukārām.

Fakīr (फकीर). A Muslim mendicant. Used in Chapter xi. 36, 58, and elsewhere.

Gainināth. Used in iii. 85-87; see the translation there. Hindus believe in the reincarnation of the soul, whereby the spirit of the departed father becomes incarnate in the son's son, a common Marathi saying being, माझा बाप or आज्ञा पोटाळ (or पोटी) आला. In the same way they believe that the spirit of a departed *guru* becomes incarnate in the son of his favourite disciple; hence the statement in Ch. iii. 85-87 that the departed *guru* Gainināth had again come to life as the son of his disciple Govind, receiving subsequently the name of Vithobā who became the father of Dnyāneshwar.

Gayatrī Mantra. A sacred verse from the *Vedas*, repeated by Brāhmins at their morning and evening devotions.

Ghatikā. A period of twenty-four minutes.

Ghāt. (1) A mountainous range dividing countries. (2) A pass or difficult passage over a hill. (3) Quay, wharf, stairs, landing place (on banks of rivers or tanks). Hence applied by washermen, tanners, dyers, Brāhmins, etc., to their respective places of resort. (4) It also means a long flight of steps on the banks of a river built for the people to bathe and wash. They are generally built near a city or village and there is always a temple near. Near the funeral ground

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also there is a *ghāt*, where people attending the funeral take a bath after the funeral.

Ghī. Clarified butter, also known as *tūp*. The butter is melted, thus removing the water that may be in it and then preserved in jars.

Gītā (गीता). The name given to the most sacred of Hindu writings in verse (often in the form of a dialogue) devoted to the exposition of the Hindu theosophical doctrines, its name being the *Bhagavadgītā* and containing the advice of Lord Krishna to Arjun. Referred to throughout in Mahipati's writings. The word *Gītā* generally refers to the *Bhagavadgītā* which forms part of the Mahābhārata and contains the advice given by Krishna to Arjun. There are also other *Gītās*, such as *Nārāyaṇ Gītā*, *Shiva Gītā*, *Nārada Gītā*, etc. See also *Stories of Indian Saints*, II, pp. xxvi, xxviii-xxix.

Gopālkālā. See Chap. li. 189, etc. The feasting and merriment which conclude the Krishna festivals by acting the sports that took place between Krishna and the cowherds.

Gosāvi (गोसावी). An ascetic. The word is a corruption from गोस्वामी i. e., one who has mastery over his senses, a religious medicant. Used in Chap. x. 158 and elsewhere.

Guṇa. (1) A quality, attribute, affection, or property whether of matter or mind; a power, faculty, excellence, virtue; a property inherent or an affection supervenient in the most comprehensive sense. (2) The constitution of created things, as comprised in three *gunas*; *satva* (existence, truth, goodness, brightness, etc.); *raja* (energy, passion, action, etc.); *tama* (evil, darkness, ignorance, etc.). All created things are a

mixture of the three, *saṁvāgūna*, *rajoṁgūna*, and *tamoṁgūna*, and therefore are spoken of as *saṁgūna* (possessing these *gūnas*). Brahma the *paramātmā* is *nirgūna* (unpossessed by these qualities). In God, in good men, in good things the *saṁva* predominates. In evil men or spirits or demons the *tama* predominates. The *rajoṁgūna* is in all as the activity of either the good or the evil or both. In God all is *saṁva*, because it is the *saṁva that is in activity* (*rajoṁgūna*). In man there is a mixture of the *saṁva* and *tama*, and the activity (*rajoṁgūna*) makes man a mixture of good and evil, sometimes the good predominating, sometimes the evil.

Guru. A religious teacher, one who instructs in the *Śāstras*.

Harabharā. A vetch, gram, *Cicer arietinum*.

Harabhis. A servant of Hari or Vishnu. A worshipper of Hari or wandering singer who praises the deeds of Hari.

Hari-kīrtan. See under *Kīrtan*.

Jaṁgam (जङ्गम). Referred to in Chapter ix. 42, etc. See also *Stories of Indian Saints*, II, p. 105. *Jaṁgam* means (1) an individual who follows Shiva, worships the *lingam* (the Phallus or emblematic representation of Shiva), and hates Brāhmans, and (2) the title of the priest or *guru* among the Lingāyat sect. *The Madras Journal of Literature and Science* for 1840 (series, vol. xi) contains ‘an essay on the creed, customs and literature of the *Jaṁgams*’ by Mr C. P. Brown. *The Bombay Gazetteer* volume on ‘Bijapur and Dharwar’ (1880) is also worthy of reference. See also on the word *Lingāyat* in this Appendix.

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Jap. Pronounced like *Jup*. The repeating of *mantras* or the names of God. A rosary may be used so as to know the number of times the *mantra* or names have been used. As this outer form requires an inner reality, *jap* stands also for meditation, for worship, for prayer, indeed for the true spiritual life of a man. The correlative of *jap* is *tap* (which see). *Tap*, literally, religious austerity, is also extended in meaning to comprise the outer religious life of a man. *Jap*, his inner religious life, and *tap* his outer religious life.

Jiva, Shiva. When *Jiva* and *Shiva* are thus used together *Jiva* stands for the individual *ātmā*, and *Shiva* for the universal *ātmā*.

Jivanmukta (जीवमुक्त). Saved while living, and through the acquirement of spiritual knowledge exonerated from further births and at present from all ritual acts.

Jondhalū. A cereal plant or its grain. *Hulcus sorghum*.

Kadabā. The stalks with their leaves of the *jondhalū*; or *javāri*, *hulcus sorghum*, used for fodder.

Kailās. The heaven of Shiva.

Kakni. A weight of shells equal to 20 cowries.

Kali Yuga or The Evil Age. The present or fourth age of the world is viewed by Hindus as the Evil Age. Its duration is considered to be 432,000 years, after which the world is to be destroyed. The present year A. D. 1935 corresponds with the *Kali Yuga* 5036. The initial year is 3101 B. C. The four *yugas* are the *Kṛitayuga*, *Tretāyuga*, *Dvāpārayuga* and the *Kaliyuga*. The four *yugas* together make a *Mahayuga* (great *yuga*) 4,320,000 years. It is this evil *Kaliyuga* that has necessitated the frequent *avatārs* to check evil, and to save mankind from its effects.

Kalpa. A day of Brahma, 432 million years of mortals.

Karma. (1) An act or a deed. (2) Religious action, as sacrifice, ablution, etc. (3) Destiny; destiny being only the allotment, to be enjoyed or suffered in the present life of the fruit of good and evil actions, performed in former lives. (4) Deed or action; as all actions through the laws of cause and effect determine the actions in the next life. *Karma* is equivalent also to fate.

Karma-mārga. The Way of Works; the road to heaven through observance of rites and ceremonies and performance of virtuous deeds. See *Dnyan-mārga* (Way of Knowledge) and *Bhakti-mārga* (Way of Devotion). The word means the way of deeds. One of the three ways of *Moksha* or deliverance: *Dnyan-mārga*, *Karma-mārga* and *Bhakti-mārga*.

Kathā. A story, fable, exploits of gods or heroes related with music and singing.

Kāvad. A bamboo lath provided with slings at each end in order to contain baskets, jars, etc., and carried on the shoulder. Used for carrying water, vegetables, etc.

Karadī. A cowrie. A shell used in making small change.

Kīrtan. Celebrating the praises of a god with music and singing. Reciting the names of the deity. In practice, however, it is a religious service of song. The leader has a topic which he delivers in song. He is accompanied with a chorus leader and musical instruments. Following their leader the audience may break out in ecstatic repetitions of the names of God or of the lines of a chorus. A *Hari-kīrtan* was thus a song-service in praise of Hari, i. e., Vishnu.

Kshatriya. See under *Varna*.

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Kshetra. A sacred spot, a sacred city, a place of pilgrimage ; also the human form.

Kulkarnī. A village officer who keeps public records and keeps the accounts of cultivators in their relation to Government.

Kunku. The *kunku* is the red mark on the forehead of a Hindu maiden or a married woman, this mark being removed from the forehead of a Hindu widow ; the *kunku* being a sign of a woman's good luck which the widow has lost.

Laghurudra (लघुरुद्र). See Ch. xlvī. 203. *Rudra* means a Vedic hymn of Shiva. The idol is given a bath while this hymn is repeated eleven times called *Ekādashini* (एकादशिनी), and when eleven Brāhmans sit and do this, i. e., when the hymn is repeated eleven times by eleven persons, or 121 times, it is called *Laghurudra* (लघुरुद्र).

Līlā (लीला). Literally, play, sport, pastime, the whole creation being considered as a sport of Brahmā, the all-pervading God. Some modern Hindu scholars suggest the idea of 'creativeness' is in the word *Līlā*.

Lingāyat. Referred to in Chapter ix, 76. An individual of the sect who worship the *lingam* (the Phallus or emblematic representation of Shiva) and who carry the representation of it suspended around the neck. Of the Hindu triad (Brahmā, Vishnu and Shiva) Lingāyats acknowledge only Shiva whose emblem is worn by both sexes. As a religious movement of reformation against Brāhmans it appears to date from about the 12th century. The essential ceremony is known as the *ashtavarna* or eightfold sacrament performed on a Lingāyat child. The Lingāyat community, 'a peaceable race of Hindu puritans,'

numbers about three millions, half of whom are in the Belgaum, Bijapur and Dharwar Districts of Bombay Presidency, the other half being found in the Mysore and Hyderabad States and the North-West corner of the Madras Presidency. The priests of the community are called *Ayyās* or *Jangams*, of whom stories will be found in Chapter ix. 42, etc., and *Stories of Indian Saints, II* (Vol. X in this series), p. 400. Mr. R. E. Enthoven's article, *Lingāyats*, in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 8, pp. 69-75 is full of information. The following excerpts from a letter dated 'Belgaum, 21st January, 1918,' in *The Times of India* from Mr. M. R. Sakhare, are worthy of note :—

'Lingāyatism is a religion protestant against ritualistic Hinduism. The religious customs, forms, principles and philosophy are so different that it forms an independent religion like Jainism. In this connection it is noteworthy that the Census Report records that Lingāyats are a religious community while it says that Marathas, etc., are a caste . . . Lingāyats are separatists, so much so that they have nothing in common with those whom they separate from, except race and nationality. The following are the broad reasons proving that Lingāyatism is not Hinduism:—

' (1) The philosophy on which the creed is based is *Shakti Vishishtādranta* philosophy, unheard of in Hindu philosophy.

' (2) The *Chāturvearna* system, the very corner-stone of Hinduism, is not to be found among the Lingāyats, as the same was absolutely discarded, being thought of as a pernicious doctrine inconsistent with a progressive society. *Bhakta* (laymen) and *Maresha* (the priesthood) supply the only distinction.

' (3) Men and women among the Lingāyats stand on the same level. Both receive the same religious impressions, while Hindu women are not so placed. •

' (4) The five impurities of the Hindus have been rejected by the Lingāyats on the doctrine that *Lingadehi sadā shuchi*.

' (5) The *Shrāddhas* are never performed by them, while these form the backbone of Hinduism.

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(6) The *Ashtavarna* system is quite peculiar to the Lingāyats, the like of which is nowhere else found.

(7) The ceremonies accorded to every Lingāyat, male or female, at the time of birth, marriage and death, are so peculiar that none can dare to say they were derived from Hinduism.

(8) Their religious scriptures and *Purāns* are quite different. It is said that because Lingāyats worship Shiva, one of the Hindu Trinity, therefore the Lingāyats are Hindus. The superficiality and speciosity of this argument are self-evident. Because they worship the same deity, they cannot be said to belong to the same religion. If it were so, the Madhvas would have been Rāmānjanas because they both worship Vishnu. Both of these sects are different because their philosophy and principles are different.

Mahant. (1) The chief or head of an order of *Gosāvis*, *Bairāgis*, etc.; a religious superior. (2) Applied to the head or leading man among *pundits*, devotees, etc.

Mahābhārata. The great epic relating to the wars between the Pāndavs and Kauravs, ascribed to Vyās as author.

Mahārāshtra. Or, the great nation. The old name of the country occupied by the Marāthā people, now included in the Bombay Presidency.

Mana. Or, mind. According to Western psychology the mind is the soul itself viewed as thinking or imagining. *Mana*, however, is regarded as an organ (*indriya*) of thinking and imagining and not a part of the pure *Ātmā* or soul.

Mānaspūjā (mental worship). Used in Chapter i. 150 and in many other places. It is customary to worship a Hindu deity with 10 or 16 materials of worship as may be available. Ordinarily these are offered to an idol, this being the easiest method of worship and observed by all alike. The *yogīs* and others who can concentrate their mind and bring before their mind's eye the form of their deity, these worship this form mentally, and all the materials of worship are

also offered mentally. This is regarded as a higher type of worship because the worshipper is able to concentrate his mind. See also under *Bhakti*.

Mandap. An open temporary structure, made with bamboo or other poles, with cloth roof and sides erected for festal occasions, for marriages, *kīrtans*, etc.

Mantra. A text, prayer, hymn or verse, which possesses mystical or supernatural power.

Marudgana (मरुद्गण). See chapter ii. 13-42 and elsewhere; also *Gana* in i. 123. Hiranyakashipu (हिरण्यकशिपु), the son of Diti (दिती), was killed by Vishnu to save Indra. Then Diti prayed to her husband कश्यप (Kashyapa the sage) that he should get another son, one who would kill Indra. Kashyapa deeply regretted this request, so he told her to observe a very difficult vow for one year after which period she would get the son. Indra waited upon her (as she was his stepmother) and watched if there was any violation of the vow. Once Diti fell asleep during the day-time and this being against the rules Indra found his opportunity and entered her womb by his *yoga* power and cut the embryo into seven pieces; these pieces began to cry. When they began to cry, Indra said मा-रुद् मा-रुद् (*mā-ruda*, i.e., 'do not cry, do not cry'), hence the word मरुत् and because they were a number counted (from गण to count) each was called मरुद्गण. Seeing this he again divided each into seven pieces and they became forty-nine. Seeing that they were still alive, Indra realized that they were अमर (immortals) and he made friends with them. So they became his helpers and each was called मरुत् गण. They became the gods of storm and wind and the helpers of Indra.

Māyā. This word is usually translated 'illusion,' but this is not a satisfactory translation. Vedāntic

philosophy postulates that there is but one substance, called *Brahma*, or *paramātmā* or *ātmā*. This substance appears in the form of the universe, and to the various forms there are names (*nāma-rūpa*). These forms are temporary and changeable, and with the change of form the name disappears. It is due to 'Ignorance' that these forms are supposed to be distinct from the 'One Substance.' The reality of these forms is not denied, but that they are distinct from the 'One Substance' is denied. That they are distinct, i. e., that there is a duality, is the particular form of illusion which is indicated by the word *Māyā*. In usage *Māyā* becomes personified as the cause of the Ignorance (*adyāya*) which sees duality where there is unity. One of the stock illustrations is that of gold in the form of various ornaments, each with its own name. That the gold appears in the form of various ornaments, is not denied, but that ornamental forms are permanent and distinct from the gold is denied. The ornaments can be melted; they disappear as ornaments, but the gold remains unchanged. To think that the ornaments were distinct from the gold would be through 'Ignorance' (*adyāya*), and the cause of the 'Ignorance,' by a sort of personification, is *Mayā*.

Modī. This is the cursive form of writing the Marathi language. The old Ashoka alphabet of the inscriptions, 250 B. C., gradually developed in time into the *Devanāgarī*, used in transcribing Sanskrit literature, as also Marathi literature. In business writing, however, haste being important and the pen being lifted from the paper as little as possible, it led to a change in the form of the *Devanāgarī* letters, which to the casual observer seems a different character, but which can quite easily be traced back to the *Devanāgarī* origin. The tradition that *Modī* was brought

from the south, or that it was the invention of Hemachandra in the 13th century, may be due to the character of the Southern cursive writing, and it might well be that Hemachandra adopted it as the form for official documents. There is no doubt, however, that the *Modī* has developed from the *Devanāgarī* simply by rapid writing, with the lifting of the pen from the paper as little as possible.

Moksha. Deliverance of the soul from the body, its exemption from further transmigration, with all its joys and sorrows, sins and good deeds, and its absorption into the divine essence.

Mridāni. One of the many names of Pārvatī, wife of Shiva.

Mukti. Exemption of the spirit from further migration and the reabsorption of it into its source, the divine monad, Brahma, the substratum and substance of universal being. This idea of the deliverance from births and deaths must be understood to include the deliverance from all sins and sorrows, even from the good deeds and joys of life, for each life is made up of these. The four forms of *mukti* are *Sāyujyatā*, *Salokatā*, *Samīpatā*, and *Sarūpatā* (see under *Sāyujyatā*).

Muni (मुनि) A sage, holy man or saint. See Chap. i. 102.

Namaskār. Worship, obeisance, reverential or respectful address or salutation. It is performed by joining the palms, inclining the head and pronouncing the word *namaskār*. A *sāṣṭāṅga namaskār* is the prostration on the ground, so that eight parts (*aṣṭa*) of the body touch the ground, and is the most profound method of showing reverence to God or man.

Nirguna. *Nir*=without + *guna*=quality or attribute. Literally without a quality or attribute. *Brahma*, or *ātman*.

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paramātmā, the one substance which appears to us as the universe, cannot be described in human words. It is indescribable (*avūchya*). While the one substance cannot be described, the forms in which it appears can be described, and their qualities determined. The forms with their names are, therefore, *saguna* (*Sa*=with, and *guna*=quality or attribute). God as a personal Being or Creator of the form in which the universe appears, is recognized as one of the forms in which the one eternal substance appears. God, therefore, is *saguna*, that is, He has qualities or attributes which can be described in human understandable words. *Brahma* is *nirguna*; God (*Īshvara*) is *saguna*. All the gods, all the *avatārs*, all the idols, and all the visions of God, are all *saguna* manifestations of the *Nirguna Brahma*, or *nirguna ātmā*. The *Saguna Īshvara*, being but one of the many forms in which the *Nirguna Īshvara* appears, is, of course, to be identified as the golden bracelet is identified with the gold of which it consists. The poet-saints, therefore, in their hymns of praise, their invocations, their worship, and their prayers, make no distinction. These are addressed as well to *Nirguna* God as to *Saguna* God. This identity of the *saguna* and the *nirguna* is often asserted very definitely.

Nivrīti. Cessation from worldly concerns and engagements; also absorption into *Brahma*; and the name of the eldest brother of *Dnyāneshwar* or *Dnyāndev*.

Ovi. A particular metre of Marathi verse.

Pada. A variety of metrical compositions, used in hymns or anthems. Very many of the poet-saints have written in this metre. See the *Padasaṅgraha* in the *Kāvyaṅgraha* series for examples.

Pāduka. An impression of a foot on stone, worshipped as the trace of some god or *guru*.

Pānsupūrī. A roll of the *Piper-betel* leaf with Areca nut, cloves, lime, etc. See *Vidā*.

Pāp. Sin in the abstract, or an evil deed. It is the exact negative correlative of the word *punya*, goodness or holiness in the abstract, or a good or holy deed. That *pāp* and *punya* (evil and good deeds) must receive a future reward of suffering or happiness is a part of Hindu philosophy, but this idea does not belong to the words themselves. Molesworth's *Marathi-English Dictionary* of 1831, founded on the *Marathi-Marathi Dictionary* of 1829, rightly defines these words. Dr Abbott states: 'I differ absolutely from the Notes on these words in Molesworth's Second Edition of 1857, and from its definition of the word *punya* as "merit," a meaning it never has had in Sanskrit, or in the whole course of Marathi literature, until influenced by Molesworth's second edition.' See further discussion under *punya*. It is important to note that the late V. S. Apte's *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* of 1912 supports Dr Abbott's view as against Molesworth.

Paramhansa. As in Ch. xlix. 37, etc. An ascetic of the highest order. One who has controlled and subdued all his senses by abstract meditation.

Peth. A region or large division of a city. A manufacturing or a trading town. A market town. A ward of a city.

Pradakshinā. Circumambulation of an object, keeping the right side towards it. These objects may be idols, sacred trees, the *tulsī* plant, a temple, or even a sacred city. Keeping the object to the left would imply irreverence.

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Prahar. An eighth part of the day of 24 hours. A *prahar* is, therefore, a period of three hours. The *prahars* begin at sunrise, at six, hence *don prahar* (two *prahars*) means noon.

Prakritī. In philosophy *prakritī* and *purusha* are words that denote the material and the immaterial universe. *Prakritī* (nature, matter, phenomenon) conceived as female, and *Purusha* (male, the soul, life, activity), by their union make the whole universe, an anthropomorphic expression of the idea expressed in English as ' matter and mind. '

Prākṛit. In the usage of the Marāthā poet-saints the *Prākṛit* language means the Marathī language. As distinguished from the *Gīrēma* (Sanskrit, the polished language), it seems the common vernacular of the people. As may be seen from the lives of the poet-saints and their works, they had to encounter a certain amount of opposition against their Marathī or *Prākṛit* versions of the sacred Sanskrit texts. Mahīpati's *Bhaktalīlāmrit*, chapter 21, contains the moving story of Brāhman pundits at Benares throwing Eknāth's *Bhāgvat* into the water because it was written in *Prākṛit*. See *Eknāth*, vol. 2 in this Series, pages 172-189. See also the entrancing story of how Madhvanāth of Nasik by his Marathī *kīrtān* convinced Pundit Bhaskarrao of Bombay, related on pp. 410-4 of this book.

prārabdha. Deeds in former births determined the course of one's life in the birth previous to this. Deeds in the previous life have determined the course of one's present life. Deeds in the present life will determine the life in the next birth. This is the law of *prārabdha*.

Prasād. (1) Favour, graciousness, propitiousness. (2) Anything (a fruit, flower, rice, etc.) given by an idol, a *guru*, a saint, as a blessing or a mark of favour. (3) Food, etc., presented to an idol or a holy person to be distributed, thus honoured, among worshippers. etc. (4) The sweetmeats and fruit distributed among the audience at the conclusion of a *kathā*, *kīrtan* or *gurān* reading.

Punya. Goodness or holiness in the abstract, or a good or holy deed. Its negative is *pāp*, or sin in the abstract or an evil deed. Dr Abbott states: ‘ In the definition of this word as also in the definition of the word *pāp*. I differ absolutely from Molesworth’s *Marathi and English Dictionary*, second edition of 1857. In a note it says, “ The word bears not the feeblest implication of holiness, godliness or purity of spirit. ” On the contrary it implies all three. And by its using the definition of “ merit ” (not found in the edition of 1831) an idea foreign to the word has since then been attached to this noble word. “ Merit ”, meaning a future reward of a good deed, is no part of the meaning of the word *Punya*. which is simply goodness or holiness in the abstract or a holy or good deed. The idea of merit belongs to Indian philosophy. but not to the word *punya*. Every *punya* will have its reward in the future, as will every *pāp*, but this idea is not in the word itself. The first edition of Molesworth of 1831, founded on the Pandits’ Marathi-Marathi edition of 1829, has the correct definition. See also Monier Williams’ Sanskrit dictionary under *punya* and *pāp*. The word *punya*, twice used in the *Rigveda*, many times used in the *Upanishads* and *Bhagavadgītā*, and all through old Marathi literature, is the exact negative of *pāp*. In no single instance does it mean “ merit ” as im-

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plying a future reward.' See also under *Pāp*. It is essential to note that concerning both these important words the late V. S. Apte's *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* of 1912 adopts the same interpretation as is set forth by Dr Abbott in this Note : students of Molesworth should remember this fact.

Puran-piñi. A wheaten cake with stuffing of coarse sugar, pea flour, etc.

Purān. A particular class of Hindu sacred literature, generally regarded as eighteen in number. They deal with stories of the creation of the world, its destruction and its renewal, of gods, goddesses, and heroes. The eighteen are *Brahma*, *Padma*, *Vishnu*, *Shiva*, *Linga*, *Garuda*, *Nārada*, *Bhāgavat*, *Agni*, *Skanda*, *Bharishya*, *Brahmacainarta*, *Mārkaṇḍeya*, *Vāmana*, *Varāha*, *Matsya*, *Kūrma*, and *Vāyu*, but there are other lists of 18, slightly varying from this. Of these 18 *Purāns* the *Bhāgavat*, giving the life and teachings of Krishna, has had the greatest influence on the thought and life of the Marāthā poet-saints. See under *Bhāgavat Pu. ān* and also our Introduction to the present book, pages **xxi-xxiv**, etc.

Purāṇik. A Brāhman well read in the *Purāns*. A public expounder of them. On account of the vast extent of Sanskrit literature those who expound the sacred books have to specialize. There are those who make a speciality of expounding some particular *Purān* and are known as *Purāṇiks*.

Purusha. See under *Prakriti*.

Raj (रज). See under *guna*.

Rāmāyana. The great epic relating the exploits of Rāma, ascribed to Valmiki as author.

Reincarnation. As in Ch. iii.85.

Āddhu and *Siddhi* (ऋद्धि सिद्धि) : Both words mean the same, literally, the accomplishments, i. e., superhuman powers or faculties, generally attained by *yogic* meditation. See also under *Siddhi*.

Rudrāksha (रुद्राक्ष) in Chapter iii. 68 and elsewhere is a tree; its berry is also called रुद्राक्ष. A rosary is worn round the neck or used for *jap* (which see) by a शैव (a Shaivite, i. e., a devotee of Shiva, शिव) just as a rosary of *Tulsī* beads is worn round the neck or used for *jap* by a वैष्णव (Vaishnav, i. e., a devotee of Vishnu) and a वारकरी (*Wārkarī*).

Saḍguru. Literally a true, or good *guru* (see under *guru*). While primarily the word applies to human teachers, or *gurus*, the poet-saints even applied it to God, for a *saḍguru* is regarded as a manifestation of God. The Marāthā poet-saints frequently refer to the high moral qualities, the sincerity, the unselfishness, the anhypocritical spirit, that mark a *saḍguru*, as distinguished from a false *guru*. On false *gurus* see our Introduction, pages lv-lx.

Sāthan. The means employed to obtain deliverance from births and deaths and all that life implies in its sins and sorrows and even joys.

Sāthu. A holy man; a saint or sage; one of subdued passions and of contemplative habits. The poet-saints give the word a moral emphasis, hence a *sādhū* is a man of pure character, one truly devoted to God, a spiritually minded man; a good man. A man can appear hypocritically a *sāthu*, and not be a *sādhū*, for a *sādhū* must be pure in heart and life. The wandering professional *sādhū*, called such, may or may not be sincere, but he is not considered a true *sādhū* without purity of heart and life. See our Introduction on 'Bogus *Sādhūs*,' pages lvi-lx.

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Saguna. See under *Nirguna*.

Samādhi (समाधी). In chapter x. 29 and 81 and elsewhere this word is used in the sense of self-immolation by drowning or burying oneself alive when in deep and devout meditation. The word is also used for a state of contemplation or absorption; also to describe the small edifice containing the *Tulsi* plant erected over a *Sannyāsi*'s burial place.

Samsār. (1) The world, mundane existence, human life, man's mortal state. (2) The affairs of life; worldly business; the vocations and engagements, the cares and troubles of secularity.

Samvatsar (संवत्सर). A year; as in chapter x. 113 and elsewhere

Sannyāsi. One who has cast off all worldly possessions and carnal or natural affections; an ascetic. The poet-saints distinguish between the hypocritical, formal *sannyāsi*, who outwardly appears only to have given up all, and the true and sincere *sannyāsi*, whose giving up of the world is genuine.

Santa. A saint, practically synonymous with *sādhu* (which see). He is one who has lost worldly desires and devotes himself to the worship of God. But whatever he may appear outwardly, no one is a *santa* without purity of heart and life. The appellation *Kavi-sant*, or poet-saints, designate those saints who were poets. The Marāthā poet-saints begin with Dnyāneshwar or Dnyāndev about A. D. 1290, so far as their works are known, and continue to the present day.*

Sāshṭānga-namaskār. See under *Namaskār*.

Satchidānand. Existence-intelligence-joy. Although *Brahma*, or the *paramātmā*, cannot be described in

human words (*avāchya*), yet because it is believed to exist, it is that which takes the form of *intelligent beings*, and to express itself in beings that feel *joy*, *Brahma* being the substratum of these; this definition of *Brahma* is very frequently employed. It should be noted that these three words, *existence*, *intelligence* and *joy* are not adjectives, but nouns. They do not connote that *Brahma exists*, or is *intelligent* and *happy*, but that the one substance, *Brahma*, in taking form, appears in the form of *existing* things, in the form of *intelligent* beings, and of those possessing *joy* and goodness.

Salva. See under *Guna*.

Sāvadhāna. Literally, 'Attention ! Give heed.' At the moment of marriage, the priest in solemn tones repeats the words, '*Sāvadhāna, sāvadhāna,*' and at that moment the curtain between the bride and bridegroom is removed, and the marriage is complete. When Rāmdās heard this word and understood that it introduced him to the entanglements of marriage, he ran away. See *Rāmdās*, vol. 8 in this series, pp. 16-17.

Sāyujyatā. The fourth of the four states in which *mukti* (final deliverance) is distinguished, *viz.*, absorption into the essence of *Brahma*. The four are *Sāyujyatā* (absorption into the essence of *Brahma*); *Salokatā* (residence in the heaven of a particular deity); *Samīpatā* (nearness to the deity); and *Sarūpatā* (bearing the likeness of God).

Shaka (शक) The name of the Hindu era in Western India as used in chapter x. 113 and elsewhere. The term is especially applied to the era of king *Shalivāhana*, which began 78 years after the Christian era.

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Shāligrām (शालिग्राम). A black stone found in the गंडकी (Gandaki) river and worshipped as Vishnu. See chapter xii. 10, etc.

Shānti. Peace. Unruffled mind.

Shesha (शेष). Name of a celebrated serpent, said to have one thousand heads, and represented as forming the couch of Vishnu or as supporting the entire world on his head. 'The Recliner on Shesha' is one of Vishnu's names.

Shloka. A verse, a stanza, or quantity of four lines. A particular metre; praise. In the Marathi commentaries the *Shloka* commented on is the Sanskrit text.

Shrāddha. A kind of funeral rite or ceremony in honour of the departed spirits of dead relatives, observed with great strictness at various fixed periods, special honour being given to paternal and maternal ancestors.

Shruti. The *Vedas* severally or collectively. The word is from the Sanskrit, meaning 'hearing.'

Shūdra. The fourth great division of Hindus; also an individual of it. The four chief divisions are *Brāhman* (the priestly caste); *Kshatrya* (the warrior, military, governing class); *Vaishya* (agricultural and mercantile classes); and *Shūdra* (the servile class) whose duty is to serve the upper three. The *atishūdra* also called *anāmik*, and *antyaja*, are those still lower than the *Shūdra* and outside of the four chief divisions. Hence they are called *asprishya* (untouchable) or *anāmik* (unmentionable). See also under *Varna*.

Shukra. Read chapter iv. 25-26. *Kavi* (कवि) is the name given to Shukrāchārya (शुक्राचार्य) who was the

guru of demons (दैत्य). He was the *guru* of Bali the grandson of Pralhād. Bali performed one hundred sacrifices and wanted to become Indra. Vishnu became incarnate as a little Brāhman boy Vāman and went to Bali's house asking for 'three foot-steps of land.' At this Bali was pleased and so granted his request. When anyone pours water on the hand of a Brāhman saying he has given a certain thing he cannot go back on his words. The phrase means pouring water with संकल्प. When Bali began to pour water on the hands of Vāman, Shukrāchārya knowing the result became a small insect and sat in the spout blocking the way so that water would not fall on the hand of Vāman who, knowing the cause, took a grass blade and pushed it in the spout. This broke the eye of Shukra and when he drew back, water began to fall on the hand of Vāman who at once became very big and covered earth and heaven with two steps. When he asked Bali to give him the third step which was promised, Bali bent forward his head and Vāman putting his foot on the head of Bali pushed him down into the nether world (पाताळ).

Siddhi. A supernatural power or faculty supposed to be attainable through the performance of certain magical, mystical or alchemical rites or processes. Eight are enumerated, viz., *anumā*, *mahimā*, *garvā*, *laghuvā*, *prāpti*, *prākāmya*, *ishitra*, and *vashitva*. The powers of *siddhis* are personified as female beings or *siddhis* who come and serve those who by their austerities or otherwise gain those powers.

Skandha. A section of a book, a book, a chapter.

Stotra. (1) Praise, panegyric, eulogium. (2) A book or writing in celebration of the praises; also a hymn.

Suāmī. A master or lord, the master or lord of, also the

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proprietor or owner of. Applied to the Deity, a god, a king, or prince, a spiritual preceptor, a husband, a holy personage, a learned Brāhman, a *Gosāwī*, *Samnyāsi*, etc. It is used also as an honorific title, Keshavaswāmi.

Swasti (स्वस्ति). In the closing verse of every chapter this is used by Mahipati as a particle meaning, ' May it be well with you ! ' This word is used as a benediction after the presentation of an offering and as the writing of a book is viewed as an offering, the word is used at the end of each chapter or story.

Tama. See under *Gunā*.

Tap. Pronounced like *Tup*. Religious austerity, pious mortification of the body. It is especially connected with the *yoga* system, and the *yogis* carry it to its extreme limit. But it also has less austere usages, meaning the duties of life, the special duties of Brāhmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. It is, therefore, the correlative of *jap*, *jap* signifying the inner spiritual life and *tap* the outer religious life. See under *Jap*.

Tilak. The spot or line made with coloured earths or unguents upon the forehead. It is considered either as an ornament or as a sectarial distinction.

Tīrtha. (1) A holy or sacred place, any place of pilgrimage, but especially particular spots along the course of sacred streams or in the vicinity of sacred springs. (2) A holy stream, or water brought from one. Water in which a Brāhman, *samnyāsi*, etc., has dipped his foot. Water which has been poured over an idol ; holy water.

Tulsi. A plant venerated by the Hindus, Holy Basil. *Ocymum sanctum*. It is usually grown in an earthen

altar before the door of the house, or in the garden behind the house. Its leaf is used in offerings, in garlands, and its stalks also have sacred uses. Those worshipping the plant go round it, keeping it to the right (*pradakṣhṇā*) with palm to palm, repeating a *mantra*, or prayer.

Untouchable. See under *Shūdra*.

Upanishad. India's oldest philosophical literature.

Upāsānū. Worship or religious service.

Vaikuntha. The heaven of Vishnu.

Vairāgī. An ascetic or devotee; one who has subdued his worldly desires of passions. The word is also applied to a class of religious mendicants. The word is also pronounced *bairāgī* as in chapter xi. 21. etc. The poet-saints distinguish between the true and the hypocritical *vairāgī*.

Vairāgya. (1) Absence of worldly desire or passion. (2) Popularly, renunciation of all sensuous delight or gratification.

Vaishya. See under the word *Varna*.

Vajrāsana (वज्रासन). In Ch. iii. 26 and elsewhere it refers to one of the many postures of the body practised by *yogīs* to control their senses. The word also means a bed of spikes.

Varna. Used in Chapter I. 175. The word means 'colour' and 'a class or order.' The four chief *varnas* or orders in Hinduism are Brāhmans (priests), Kshatriyas (warriors), Vaishyas (merchants), and Shūdras (labourers); the *Asprishya* or untouchables being outside these four orders. See under *Shūdra*.

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Vedas. The oldest of the Hindu Scriptures. The four *Vedas* are the *Rigveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Sāmaveda*, and the *Atharvaveda*.

Venunāda (वेणुनाद). The melody of the tunes of a pipe. See chapter v. 196. *Venu* (वेणु) in Sanskrit means a bamboo, also the tune of a flute made of bamboo.

Vidū. A roll of the leaf of *Piper-betel* with *Areca-nut*, cloves, lime, etc. It is usually chewed after a meal. It is distributed to an audience after a *kīrtan*, or any public assembly, and is the final act. It is believed to be a digestive, and also as purifying the mouth. It is generally called *pān-supārī* (leaf *supārī* nut). Many have the bad habit of chewing it constantly.

Videhī. Literally, one without a body (*vi-deha*). In usage, however, it implies a temporary or permanent absorption of the mind in a way to make one unconscious of the possession of a body, as when one is intensely listening to a *kīrtan* he is for the time being a *videhī*. Or when through a life of constant contemplation of the *ātmā*, or of God, the ascetic or devotee loses all thought of his body, or cold or heat, hunger or thirst, desires or passions, he is a *videhī*. A man is a *videhī* when the spiritual completely dominates the physical.

Vishnu's Names. These are many, at least a thousand, says Hindu tradition. Many are found in Mahipati's book. A few of the chief are collected in Appendix IV of *Stories of Indian Saints II*, the 10th vol. in this series.

Viveka. Right thinking. To the Vedāntist right thinking means the discrimination between reality and unreality.

Vṛindāvan (वृंदावन) is (1) the name of a small fruit which has a beautiful colour, but which is very bitter inside; and (2) see chapter v. 126, a raised mound of earth to plant and preserve the 'holy basil' tree.

Wādū. (1) A stately or large edifice, a mansion or palace. (2) A division of a town, a quarter, a ward, as Brāhmanwādā, Mahār wādā. (3) An enclosed piece of meadow-field, or garden ground; an enclosure. (4) A cluster of huts of agriculturists, a hamlet.

Wārkaris. The name given to the most devoted followers of the *bhakti* saints. Their name *Wārkarī* means literally 'time-keepers' and indicates their habit of travelling regularly on pilgrimage. The sect is said to have been founded by Dnyāneshwar in the 13th century and consolidated in the 17th either by Tukārām or his followers. For their beliefs and practices see an English account of them in *The Bombay Gazetteer* (Vol. xx, pp. 471-3) and in our own *Life and Teaching of Tukārām* (pp. 170-3), and a Marathi account in the *Mahārāshtra Dnyankosh* (Vol. 20, pp. 158-176), the article entitled *Wārkarī Panth* having been written by Professor Shankar Waman Dandekar, himself a *Wārkarī*.

Yama. The god who rules over the spirits of the dead.

Yoga. Spiritual or abstract devotion; union with Brahma through abstract meditation or contemplation; also the practice or exercise of this sort of worship.

Yogabhrashṭa. One who was interrupted in his preceding birth during the performance of *yoga* (or abstract meditation upon *Brahma*). As an example, a pious out-caste, devoted to Eknāth, is called a *Yogabhrashṭa*. In the *Autobiography of Bahinābāi*, a calf, because of

its peculiar pious actions, is called a *Yogabhrashta*. See pages 9-10 in *Bahinā Bāi*, volume 5 in this series. Indeed any pious person can be described as a *yoga-bhrashta*, as one whose pious life in a former birth was accidentally interrupted and has now a further opportunity. In chapter vi. 68 of this book. Chāngdev is so described.

Yogī. (1) A performer of the abstract meditation called *yoga*. (2) An ascetic or devotee in general. Popularly a *yogī* is supposed to be able to gain extraordinary powers called *siddhīs* through his practice of *yoga*, and the ash-covered *yogī* is able to instil much fear in the minds of the ignorant. The poet-saints, of course, distinguish between the hypocritical *yogī* and the true *yogī* whose heart and life must be pure. See also under the word *Siddhi*.

Yojana. A measure of distance equal to four *Kōs*, roughly about eight miles.

Yuga. See under *Kālī Yuga*.

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